

A.P.O.



David Burnes · Stewart.

25 : XII : 43.

A.Π.Θ.

Bridle and Brush

A.P.O.



G. D. ARMOUR ON "THE DOG"
(By Joseph Crawhall)

BRIDLE AND BRUSH

Reminiscences of an Artist Sportsman

by

George Denholm Armour

*With Four Colour Plates and 127
drawings in black-and-white by the
Author, Joseph Crawhall, Phil
May, Maurice Greiffenhagen and
Major C. A. Rickards*

ΑΩΡΕΑ
Ι. ΜΕΓΑΣ
Αριθμ. 20849

LONDON

NEW YORK

Eyre & Spottiswoode Charles Scribner's Sons

MCMXXXVII

A.Π.Ω.

PRINTED IN GREAT BRITAIN
FOR EYRE AND SPOTTISWOODE (PUBLISHERS) LTD.

TO

My Wife Violet

AND

My Little Daughter Jean

A.Π.Θ.♦

Introductory Note

“**G**IVE a dog a bad name and hang him” is a well-worn saying, but that it still has its moral was brought home to me when in search of a name for this book. After having by process of elimination discarded the best part of a dictionary of words and combinations of words, I did think I had hit on just the thing required and felt as proud of it as a mother of her first-born. What it was I will not tell, for a combination of publishers and prospective buyers condemned it; I agreed with them, and it is dead and buried, unlamented.

I had had my chance and missed, and could not “tack another shot,” as the stalker often advises the “rifle” in a similar situation. I felt that it was up to the critics to have one; they responded like good men and the result can be seen on the title-page. We hope it is a bull’s-eye.

“Bridle” is a connecting link with the horse which the reader will find obtruding himself constantly throughout the book. “Brush,” being of great variety, might lead to misunderstanding, so I may explain that the particular kind referred to is neither the humble servant of the dental equipment, nor its big brother which sweeps the streets, but an instrument by means of which pictures—good, bad and indifferent—are painted. So it is certainly not without relevance to the matter in this book.

In revising these reminiscences they seemed rather without sequence, but, being so, they perhaps make an all the more faithful picture, for I have been pretty much a Jack-of-all-trades,

Introductory Note

mixing up work and play till sometimes it was hard to tell t'other from which. For me, as for so many others, the Great War was the greatest divergence from the ordinary course of life, and if I seem to have devoted rather a considerable space to my little view of it—like a mouse viewing the New York skyscrapers, I dare say—my excuse is that it may interest other mice.

I have referred in these pages to the help I often received from other sportsmen who sent me in stories and suggestions for my work in *Punch*, and it is a curious fact that I received more of these during the War than at any other time. Written as they often were, amid the dirt, the discomfort and the danger of the trenches, it almost seemed as though Providence had awakened a latent sense of humour among very many men, as if to provide an antidote to the horrors of their immediate surroundings.

I have tried to make this book as far as possible a chat between friends, recalling people and incidents past, but including, I hope, sufficient matter of general interest to those who may not have followed any of the pursuits described. Many books of this kind provide "third-party interest" by stories about the great ones of the earth but, truth to tell, though people have always interested me more than places, I have often found amusement among people of no particular consequence by this world's reckoning. And in any case, I prefer to avoid the personalities and gossip about other people's intimate affairs which seems to be the fashion among a good many writers of to-day, and I hope no word of offence to anyone can be found in this book.

June, 1937

G. D. ARMOUR

The Contents

CHAPTER	PAGE
I. BEGINNING AT THE BEGINNING	I
II. SCOTTISH STUDENT DAYS	21
III. MY FIRST STAY IN MOROCCO	45
IV. LONDON, PHIL MAY AND EARLY HUNTING DAYS	63
V. MEMORIES OF THE TANGIER HUNT	87
VI. SPAIN, LONDON AGAIN AND HERTFORDSHIRE WITH CRAWHALL	119
VII. WITH THE BEAUFORT AND THE V.W.H.	149
VIII. DRAWING FOR THE PRESS, DEER STALKING AND VARIOUS COMMISSIONS	173
IX. AUSTRIA-HUNGARY AND AMERICA, 1910-12	197
X. FAMILY MATTERS AND SOME NOTES ON FRENCH HOUNDS	235
XI. THE WAR: REMOUNTS AT SWAYTHLING	249
XII. SALONIKA	265
XIII. FAREWELL TO THE EAST	289
XIV. TAKING UP THE THREADS	317
XV. CONCLUDING	369

The List of Illustrations

Colour Plates

<i>G. D. Armour on "The Dog."</i> From a drawing by Joseph Crawhall	Frontispiece
	FACING PAGE
<i>Joseph Crawhall.</i> From a painting by the author	96
<i>Mules dragging out the dead bull at a bull-fight.</i> Unfinished sketch for a painting by the author	128
<i>The Reverend Dr. Hooker.</i> From a water-colour drawing by the author for "Hunting Tours of Surtees," published by Messrs. Blackwood	224

Black and White Drawings

	PAGE
<i>An early effort at 6½ years</i>	1
<i>Attempt to Draw at 7 years</i>	2
<i>An Old Cab Horse</i>	3
<i>Chancing the Top-binder</i>	5
<i>My First Jump in the Hunting Field</i>	9
<i>Early studies of horses</i>	12
<i>The Drake</i>	16
<i>Studies of Hounds</i>	17
<i>Tailpiece</i>	19
<i>My daughter Jean</i>	22
<i>The Huntsman</i>	25
<i>Portrait of Lady Read</i>	29
<i>"I, of course, followed"</i>	32

Black and White Drawings

	PAGE
<i>Cubbing</i>	33
<i>Pounded</i>	37
<i>Birds running in front</i>	41
<i>Moroccan Transport</i>	47
<i>Moroccan Sheep</i>	49
<i>Running for Blood</i>	52-3
<i>Pig-sticking</i>	57
<i>Transport at Minicola</i>	60
<i>Tally-bo Back</i>	65
<i>A leaf from Phil May's Sketch-book</i>	67
<i>A premium Stallion: "Cock of the Walk"</i>	71
<i>Zoo Sketches</i>	75
<i>Training a Polo Pony</i>	79
<i>The Hunters' Improvement Society Show</i>	83
<i>Tailpiece</i>	86
<i>A Sketch by Joseph Crawhall</i>	93
<i>Dan Dancer, a sketch by Joe Crawhall</i>	98
<i>Preliminary Canter</i>	103
<i>Hunting Scene, by Joseph Crawhall</i>	105
<i>The Tangier Hounds. From a photograph</i>	109
<i>Fox and Hare, by Joseph Crawhall</i>	118
<i>Spanish Gipsy and Donkey</i>	121
<i>Play with the Capa</i>	125
<i>Planting the Banderillas</i>	129
<i>The Picador</i>	133
<i>J. W. Waterhouse, R.A., Maurice Greiffenhagen, Mowat Louden and G. D. Armour. From a photograph</i>	137
<i>G. D. Armour and Infant Son. From a drawing by the late Maurice Greiffenhagen, R.A.</i>	141
<i>"At Tattersalls"</i>	143
<i>One of Crawhall's Rough Sketches</i>	145
<i>Tailpiece</i>	147
<i>The late Duke of Beaufort and the Rev. E. A. Milne, M.F.H.</i>	151
<i>An Object in Search of Subjects</i>	155

Black and White Drawings

	PAGE
<i>The Curious End to a Hunt</i>	159
<i>A Ploughing Match</i>	162
<i>Early days at the Starting Gate; an impression of Mr. Arthur Coventry</i>	165
<i>Joe Willis and the V.W.H. (Cricklade)</i>	169
<i>Tailpiece</i>	172
<i>Preliminary sketch for a "Punch" drawing</i>	174
<i>McDonald the Stalker</i>	177
<i>Ponies Waiting, Benmore, Ross</i>	179
<i>Young Stags</i>	182
<i>Waiting for the Bag</i>	185
<i>The Eagle's Nest</i>	187
<i>Roffey on his Chestnut Mare. From "Hunting Tours of Surtees," published by W. Blackwood and Sons</i>	189
<i>An illustration for John Masefield's "Reynard the Fox." Published by Messrs. Heinemann, Ltd.</i>	193
<i>An Austrian Sportsman, circa 1910</i>	198
<i>Trotting Races in Vienna</i>	199
<i>The Imperial Riding School, Vienna</i>	203
<i>Polo at New York, 1913</i>	205
<i>Central Park, New York: Mounting Stones</i>	210-11
<i>The International Polo Match, New York, 1913. Drawn for "Country Life"</i>	215
<i>Devereux Milburn, U.S. Back</i>	217
<i>A Practice Game at Piping Rock</i>	221
<i>International Polo, America, 1913: Larry Waterbury scoring</i>	223
<i>American racing stable types</i>	226
<i>The American Team; an impression of Larry Waterbury</i>	227
<i>A Coon Kennelman</i>	229
<i>Captain T. Ritson making a Run</i>	230-1
<i>Just before the International Match</i>	233
<i>Seats of the "Mitey"</i>	236
<i>J. N. Waterbury</i>	237
<i>Otter Hunting</i>	241

Black and White Drawings

	PAGE
<i>Setters at lunch time</i>	243
<i>Badger Cubs</i>	245
<i>The Vale</i>	247
<i>Entraining Horses during the Great War</i>	251
<i>The Finished Article</i>	257
<i>Loaded</i>	261
<i>Gallipoli: The Narrows</i>	263
<i>A Macedonian Peasant</i>	267
<i>Salonika types</i>	270
<i>A Goal (Polo)</i>	271
<i>Flighting on the Vardar Marsh</i>	275
<i>Where the Fire Began; the Turkish Quarter in Salonika, 1917</i>	279
<i>The Destruction of Salonika by Fire in 1917</i>	284-5
<i>Kilid Bahr at the Narrows, Gallipoli</i>	290
<i>Constantinople types</i>	291
<i>Selling Mules, Salonika, 1918</i>	293
<i>A Balkan Mountaineer</i>	294
<i>One of our Purchasers</i>	295
<i>A Normal Day with the Mashlak Hunt, Constantinople, 1919.</i>	
<i>From a drawing by Major C. Rickards</i>	297
<i>Two Struma Valley Hounds</i>	300
“ <i>Goose</i> ” and Tim	301
<i>Mount Athos from the Sea</i>	303
<i>The Monastery of St. Paul, Mt. Athos, 1919</i>	305
<i>On my balcony, Mt. Athos</i>	307
<i>The Waiter at Karyes</i>	308
<i>On the road to Mt. Athos</i>	309
<i>Monks of Mt. Athos</i>	311
<i>The Senior Monk</i>	313
<i>Gallipoli</i>	316
“ <i>Signs of the Times</i> ”	319
<i>Doncaster: In the Sale Paddocks</i>	324-5
<i>The late George and Mrs. Fenwick</i>	329
<i>Hunter Turned Out</i>	333

Black and White Drawings

	PAGE
<i>The Pytchley running in the Crick Vale</i>	338-9
<i>New Forest Ponies</i>	341
<i>Blown!</i>	343
<i>The Pytchley at Crick</i>	347
<i>Under the Hammer</i>	350
<i>Leading in the Winner</i>	351
<i>Horses in Snow</i>	355
<i>Stalking: A Spy</i>	357
<i>The Drag Down</i>	359
<i>Shelter: A Stalking Sketch</i>	362
<i>A leaf from the Author's Stalking Sketch-book</i>	363
<i>A Pass in the Highlands</i>	366
<i>Colonel the Hon. Keith and Mrs. Mason</i>	371
<i>Major C. Ward Jackson</i>	373
<i>The late Miss Esmé Jenner, 1932</i>	375
<i>Remus, 1933</i>	379
<i>Mrs. George Salt</i>	381
<i>Major G. C. S. Hodgson, M.C., 1936</i>	385
<i>The Author with the Duke of Beaufort's</i>	387
<i>The Author; an impression by Major C. A. Rickards</i>	389

Acknowledgments

My thanks are due to Messrs. W. Blackwood and Sons, Ltd., for permission to reproduce two drawings from those which I did for them; to Country Life, Ltd., for the drawings from Pastime in Good Company; and to Messrs. William Heinemann, Ltd., for the illustration from Reynard the Fox. The sketches of Mount Athos, which originally appeared in Land and Water, are reproduced by the courtesy of The Field, and my old friend Major Rickards has kindly allowed me to use his drawing of the Mashlak Hunt in 1919 and an impression of myself.

Bridle and Brush

A.P.O.

CHAPTER I

Beginning at the Beginning

WHEN discussing the idea of this book with its publishers, I said my difficulty was to know where to begin. "Why not at the beginning?" was the reply. This would seem quite reasonable, but then what really is the



An early effort at 6½ years

beginning? This rather difficult question set me trying to recall some precedent, and the very fragmentary memory of a book, seen many years ago, came back to me. I think an American humorist was responsible for it. It purported to be an autobiography, and began "Just born," going on, so far as I remember, to recount the joy of the author's mother

Beginning at the Beginning

regarding his arrival, and the fact that his father was not so enthusiastic.

This certainly was beginning at the beginning, but I turned



Attempt to Draw at 7 years

down the idea of cribbing it, realizing that such an opening, when it comes to relating ordinary events, might seriously damage the chance of their being believed, and I resolved to begin with a plain statement of fact, the truth of which is backed by an entry in the family Bible.

In Scotland, where I was born, it was the universal practice

Beginning at the Beginning

to use a flyleaf of that book, which every household possessed, on which to enter the date of birth and baptismal name of all members of the family. In my case the entry reads: "George Denholm, born 30th January, 1864."



An Old Cab Horse

The history of many families, if honestly told, would show a switchback of ups and downs, and mine was no exception. I think I may say my entry to life was made near, if not at, the absolute bottom of one of the slopes, and that something wrong with the machinery has somewhat delayed the expected run up.

My father was a partner—the sole surviving one, I believe—of an old cotton-broking firm in Glasgow, and at the time of the

Early Recollections

American Civil War, when all cotton business was concentrated in Liverpool, he unfortunately followed it there.

Cotton-brokering, at that time, became the medium of wild gambling, blockade-running and other things far removed from the safe and decorous methods to which my father had been accustomed. Many failures resulted, and he was among the victims.

He had always lived in the country, in Lanarkshire mostly, and there he returned, to a small property of my mother's, after seven years in Liverpool, a broken-hearted man, to die at the age of fifty-four.

All this is probably of little interest to readers, but of some to myself, as from my father I trace an hereditary instinct towards horses and sport, in spite of the fact that in those early days in Liverpool I was as far removed from contact with such things as it was possible to be. Some freak of nature, not hereditary, made me try to draw, and the Liverpool cab horses were my models at such an early age that I can distinctly remember when I first realized that the fore and hind legs of the horse differed in shape.

One of my earliest recollections is being taken to the Grand National, and, oddly enough, I also remember the names of the two horses most spoken of, the Lamb and the Colonel. Which won that day I cannot say, but, looking up the records, I find the date must have been either 1870 or '71, and that each of these horses, respectively, won the race in one of these years. Driving to Aintree from Liverpool, in a hired carriage of some kind, impressed me a great deal; the actual race I do not remember, having in all probability seen little of it.

Before my advent, my father hunted regularly with the

Chancing the Top-binder



My First Hunt

Lanark and Renfrewshire Hounds, of which hunt he was for years a member, and acted master for one season I believe, in the absence of Col. Buchanan, then the master. He kept two or three hunters in that country, which, before the introduction of wire, must have been a fine sporting one, of sound grass and moorland, enclosed by walls and thorn fences. I hear it is now wired everywhere, but still carries on by means of jumping-places put up by the hunt.

Beyond my father's connection with the Lanark and Renfrewshire Hunt, it has little to do with myself and my own hunting, except that it was the first that I attended on horseback. A kind friend had been good enough to lend me a horse which he had originally purchased as a hunter, but which I knew also did duty in harness. He warned me that he was a somewhat uncertain jumper, and this I had at least one opportunity of verifying. It occurred this way. Hounds were drawing a small wood among the hills, and not wishing to miss anything of my first hunt, I had followed them into cover. It was blank, and coming out, an obstacle presented itself in the shape of a gateway, characteristic of that country, composed of stone pillars, in which were slots cut to take the ends of two good strong spruce fir poles. In front of me was a farmer on a big, unclipped, bay horse, a couple of strides and he hopped over the rails, which were about the thickness of light telegraph poles. In my blank ignorance, I thought this was all in the day's work, but evidently it was one of my hunter's off days, for he breasted the top one, broke it in the middle and landed on his nose. Where I was at the moment I cannot say, certainly not in the saddle, but some instinct, inherited probably from a monkey ancestor, prevented our entire separation. Later on

The Lanark and Renfrewshire Hunt

I got to know that farmer, and learned his speciality was show-jumping, the unclipped animal being a well-known performer in the show-ring.

Looking up some records lately, I came on a book which gave an account of the origin of the Lanark and Renfrewshire Hunt, and as such things are so often only a vague matter of tradition, a few extracts may be of interest to those who only know the modern hunting-field and its ways. Hounds were known to have hunted before that, but the hunt proper originated in 1771, when it was known as the "Roberton Hunt," from the name of its first Master, Captain Roberton, elected by the original twenty-three members. It was agreed that the Master should be elected annually, and that additional members, above the said twenty-three, were to be balloted for as for any other club.

"It was resolved" that their uniform "should be a dark brown frock of Hunters' beaver," whatever that was, "made without lapels, and to button at the sleeves." An earth-stopper was appointed, and was to be provided annually with a "coat and waistcoat of rough green cloth, two pairs of white plaied breeches, and a leather cap, the coat to have a red cape to have embroidered on it: 'Earth-stopper to the Roberton Hunt.'" They evidently did not wish to lose him! Ample provision was also made for the liquid refreshment of the members, and the Treasurer was instructed to obtain "four Delph bowls to take a bottle of rum each, with the Roberton Hunt written on them." I cannot find that provision was made for the rum aforesaid but its want was amply made up for by a "a hogshead of London porter, six dozen strong beer, five dozen port, and one dozen sherry"; then, as if on an afterthought, the Treasurer



My First Jump in the Hunting Field

Schooldays

was instructed to "send up six or eight gallons of French Brandy, put in a Dutch case." Truly the sportsmen of those days knew how to provide against any eventuality, and being a member of a hunt then was far from likely to be an *empty* honour, especially as this provision was made on behalf of twenty-three members.

After some desultory learning from governesses, along with my sisters, and a short spell at Glasgow Academy, I was sent to St. Andrew's in Fife, to a school called Madras College. I believe it was founded by a returned Anglo-Indian, hence the name. My record there was far from being glorious. These were the days when punishment applied to the person was meted out on the spot; each master carried in his pocket a weapon known as the "tawse," which consisted of a strap, varying, according to the taste of the wielder, from something like a girth to a stirrup leather, and split at the end into several parts. Anything up to a dozen strokes of this were applied to the hand of the victim who had disregarded prep and could not do a lesson to the satisfaction of the master. I think I may claim to be somewhat of a connoisseur of tawse, as I sampled a variety of these instruments of torture. Curiously enough this penalty was preferred to "lines" in nearly all cases, and I dare say would still be. I was in the house of the German master, not the largest, but, I think, the best run. This was largely owing to a dear old Matron whom I still remember with gratitude. In contrast to what one hears now, we were well fed and a tuckshop was, if a luxury, not a necessity by any means.

At that time fitted baths and luxuries of that kind were by no means general, and our house was no exception. "Tub night" was Saturday only, and the ceremony took place in the

Schooldays

prep room, where there was a collection of what were called "Sits-baths." As the master spent the evening at the Royal and Ancient Golf Club, of which he was a member, it may be understood it was also held by us boys to be a special occasion for relaxation. Pillow fighting, though forbidden, was a feature of the entertainment. Our part of the house was on two floors,



and at this time a state of war existed between the top one, to which I belonged, and that below. The tactics of our O.C., an Irish boy, was to dispute the return, after bath-time, of the enemy to their dormitories below us. They, though older and heavier, had to fight the first part of the battle without pillows, but they generally forced the position, and we had to fight a rear-guard action, retreating on our defences above. On one such night I was posted behind a door at the head of the stairs, on out-post duty, and hearing a stealthy approach up the stairs, I waited in the darkness until the door opened, then hurled myself on the intruder, to find that I had landed upon the back of the house master, unexpectedly returned from the club. To

Early Golf

the credit of Dr. Shaefer, the incident did not end in tragedy for me, as with less of a sportsman it well might have done; a telling-off for breaking quite a number of rules was all I got; and, thinking of it now, I suspect the good master got a private laugh at the club out of it.

Rugby football, at which, having a turn of speed, I played half, then called quarter back, and, it being St. Andrews, of course, golf were our games. At the former I broke my nose, a rather obtrusive organ naturally, and at the latter many clubs. The nose cost nothing, and the clubs little, as in those days one could buy a driver, made by old Tom Morris or Forgan with their own hands, for about three shillings and sixpence, or little more. It makes me feel almost prehistoric to think that I played golf—pronounced then as spelt, by the way—in the days when there were only about a dozen golf clubs in the country all told. What changes since that time!

A rather curious thing regarding golf may be worth mention. It is in reference to the garment known then as knickerbockers, and now so nearly connected with golf as to be called “plus-fours.” Schoolboys are about the last to take notice of dress in either themselves or others, but I can remember our talking for a week about a golfer—I believe it was Leslie Balfour, then one of the great players—who had played a round in knickerbockers. This, till then, was an unheard-of breach of etiquette, and if it had been suggested that a member of the Royal and Ancient had gone round without his coat, I believe the matter would have come up before the committee. Trousers, and for members of the club, their scarlet jackets, were *de rigueur*.

I have always regretted not having had the chance to play

Games and Sports

cricket, especially later when my two boys were growing up, one of whom was at Osborne and Dartmouth, and the other Malvern and Cranwell, the Air Force College. Somehow a father cannot afford to lose even the prestige attached to games.

The fact was that at St. Andrews, golf ruled out almost all other games except rugger, then considered the only football worthy of a gentleman. Even at that time soccer was largely a professional game, the amateurs who played it being mechanics in the large towns; often, so we said anyway, with a view to chances of promotion to a profitable position either as a pro., or to a well-paid job. We really knew little of the inside working of that, I do not suppose that anything like the large sums of money one hears of now were paid for individual players then or probably we should have heard of it.

Rugby in Scotland has always been rigidly an amateur game, and Association has not.

The last time I ever handled a rugger ball was in connection with a scratch match got up by a tennis club to which I belonged, and in which were a number of ex-rugger players. Some rash member was struck with the idea that we should challenge the Glasgow Academicals, a well-known club, to send out a team to where we lived. This they very sportingly did, and I have no doubt they sent one far from their best.

Goal-posts were erected in a fairly suitable field and the great day arrived.

Old jerseys, not all of the same colour, were dug out, and we set to. After ten minutes or so we realized that something like ten years or more without having played the game, was a handicap which nothing could level up. By that time about a quarter of our team were sitting about being rubbed for cramp by quite

Games and Sports

another quarter of our number, and the other seven and a half were none too sound, though trying to carry on. A young brother and I were about the only ones left capable of a run or a tackle, when things were brought to a head by one of the poor remainder becoming a rather bad case of concussion. At this point the captain of the other side suggested that the match should be drawn or postponed or something, anyhow we adjourned for refreshment and tea, at which all excepting the concussed one did men's work. The moral seems to be, don't think that a few games of evening tennis keep you fit enough to play rugger.

Fishing had been the earliest field sport I had had anything to do with, as the little property where my early years were passed included one side of a stream which held very good trout then. Now, I regret to say, it is more like a main drain, through building developments in the neighbourhood.

At school I made inquiries, with a not very encouraging result, but I did, however, hear of one stream available. This, with another boy, I determined to try. There and back was a walk of close on twenty miles, but we did not mind that, so armed with a box of worms and the other requisites we tramped our ten miles full of hope.

Unfortunately our chances of sport were cut short by my having inadvertently hooked a fine drake, which swallowed the bait and hook, when during a rest I had laid down my rod. Fear of the consequences prompted an early departure, although not before my companion, even less experienced than I was, landed, by main force, a trout of over a pound weight. I caught only the drake which not being in the bag could not be counted.

Leaving School

I was, without doubt, a dud as a scholar. I do not blame the school; perhaps its system was good, but it failed to interest me. Anyway, even the slight progress I might have made was suddenly brought to a conclusion. A further curtailment of the



The Drake

family finances, after the death of my father, necessitated that I should at once begin to learn more directly how to make a living. I had always drawn, or tried to draw, chiefly animals and particularly horses, so it was decided that I should study art, and the extraordinary kindness of an old friend of my mother's made this possible, as she offered to take me to live



Studies of Hounds

The Edinburgh Art School

in Edinburgh, so that I could go to the Art School there, with the object of entering the Royal Scottish Academy Life School.

It is superfluous to say I enjoyed those years; my second mother and good angel, Miss Helen Syme, was a wonderful person, a Scots woman of the finest type, full of the humour so often found in Scotland; old, but in possession of all her faculties of mind, and also of an innate and sympathetic understanding of the nature of a growing lad.

This old lady had a rare collection of stories from her own experience, and other sources. One I have never forgotten was of an old Scots woman who had a daughter whom she knew to be of not very attractive appearance. She was overheard praying as follows: "O Lord, gie Jean a guid husband, and if ye canna dae that, gie her a compitancy, and O Lord, if ye dinna ken what that is, it's four hundred a year, paid quarterly in advance."



CHAPTER II

Scottish Student Days

AFTER something like two years in which I learned the rudiments of perspective and drawing generally, I succeeded in passing into the R.S.A. Life School.

This took up my mornings and evenings; copying in the National Gallery and working in a small studio I rented, took up the rest of my time. I suppose I may claim to have done pretty well there, as the R.S.A. granted me the rare favour of an extra year in the school, and, though I never rated such things very highly, nor do I now, I won most of the prizes available.

This, in the circumstances, was of great use to me as most of the prizes were in money, which I lacked, and they helped to pay for my studio and other incidental expenses. Another source of income at that time was painting animal portraits and selling some pictures exhibited in the Scottish Academy and elsewhere.

A kind critic has suggested that it would be of interest to tell why I chose art as a profession. Frankly, I do not know. I am afraid I have always been given to following some kind of instinct, the result sometimes being good, sometimes not. A painter's life if he can make ends meet is undoubtedly a good one, full of hopes and excitements, but full of disappointments too. The picture never finally comes up to his hopes, though sometimes for a time it almost seems to have realized them. Then perhaps it is sold and the artist does not see it again for a

Drawing for the Press

time, but when he does he sees many faults to which enthusiasm blinded him before, and thinks how much he would like to do it all over again. Sometimes he tries, but it is no use; the enthusiasm is gone and the result is worse than ever.



My daughter Jean

Contrast with this the life of the man who illustrates or works for the Press. Hard work, with a very restricted medium, is his lot, "one down t'other come on." No sooner is one drawing completed than he has to tackle the next. To do at all well, he must have a facile enthusiasm, easily awakened and readily switched from one thing to another. He may have to think out a subject and illustrate it, knowing all the time that an editor, supposed to know everything, will have the last word

Drawing for the Press

as to whether it will even be published at all. Generally, as in most things now, the illustrator becomes a specialist and in consequence acquires a definite knowledge of certain subjects of which the editor is, more likely than not, absolutely ignorant. Yet, against his judgment there is no appeal. During the War I had some officers serving with and under me who most conscientiously insisted on doing everything themselves, from the sergeant-major's duty upwards. The result was never satisfactory. The artist's or writer's position as regards an editor is much the same as junior officers to their O.C. If he is good, he sees that they do their part to the best of their ability, and leaves them to it. To do otherwise is to kill enthusiasm, without which there is no chance of any good work at all.

I have often been asked for advice by young people entering the various branches of art. My advice is, if you can paint, paint, and be your own master, rise by your own merit or fail for the lack of it. If you become a so-called black and white artist, and specialize in some particular subject, you will after a time gain a public of your own, but you may still find yourself at the mercy of one man with little knowledge and less interest in your speciality, who can, without any definite ill-will, prevent your public from even seeing your work. He may be obsessed with that mythical entity, the "man in the street," and may more than likely forget that there are men on the land. So unless you go to live in a suburb and adjust your outlook to that of your neighbours you may well find yourself a misfit.

At one time I got a connection in painting old ladies' pet dogs. They seemed always to be old—both ladies and dogs, and, if I was learning to paint, I was also learning tact in managing both of them. Many were snappy little beasts—I mean the

A Misadventure with Chloroform

dogs—and I got more than one nip during the sittings. I learnt from one lady how to revive her dog from the fits to which he was subject. A chloroform cork passed under the nose was always effective. Owners of overfed pet dogs please note, but note also and avoid a mistake I made some years after when, not getting immediate results on a fox terrier belonging to a friend, I used the bottle, putting the dog so completely under the drug that he never came out. I only learned after this that dogs take chloroform very badly.

This reminds me of an incident told me by a son of Sir James Simpson, the discoverer of chloroform. His father was experimenting with various anæsthetics and, on a night when he expected several friends to dinner, he prepared a doped bottle of champagne. On consideration, however, he realized that it would be unfair to use it, and the bottle was hastily put aside. Dinners in those days were long affairs, and about the middle of the meal there was a strange hiatus, and the courses ceased to arrive. Investigation led to the discovery of the cook, down and out, under the kitchen table. I do not know if Sir James learned what he wanted, but it may be that the cook should share the glories of his great discovery.

The Simpsons were some of my most valued friends in Edinburgh, especially Eve Simpson. They had been intimate friends, in Edinburgh and at Fontainebleau, of Robert Louis Stevenson, and I heard many stories of that great man, and of the artistic fraternity who were his associates. The community was a very bohemian one, mostly very poor in this world's goods, but happy in spite of it. "I'm poor, I'm old, and I'm baldheaded" was a phrase I always remember connecting with one of the party, a French artist, also an account of his one and only



The Huntsman

Robert Alexander, R.A.

attempt to cross the Channel, to see an exhibition in London. He had no experience of the sea, and the others impressed upon him the horrors of *mal de mer*, which they said was inevitable. They advised him that his only chance of avoiding this was to go to bed and drink absinthe—his favourite beverage—until unconscious. Having followed this prescription faithfully, he awoke in the morning feeling far from well, but comforted by seeing through the porthole of his cabin the seaweed-covered wall of the quay. He sought the deck to find that a fog had prevented their departure and that he was still in Calais.

During my student days in Edinburgh I was greatly helped by Robert Alexander, R.S.A., a very fine animal painter, whose work is much less widely known in England than it deserves. He allowed me to come whenever I liked to his studio at Colinton, where I saw him do much of his best work, and profited by his sound advice as to my own attempts. A good-hearted but very touchy man, I, in common with a good many other friends, had times of estrangement from him, owing generally to some misunderstanding which should have been easily cleared away, but I have nothing but gratitude in my memory of him and his kindness. I remember Alexander being greatly, and I think justifiably, offended by some difference of opinion as to the price of a horse portrait commissioned for a brewer. The purchaser somewhat crudely remarked that painting seemed to be as profitable as brewing, to which R. A. replied, rather aptly, “Well, do you think it is easier?”

I was reminded of Alexander recently when looking over the Duke of Portland’s book, *Memories of Racing and Hunting*. Reproduced in it are two pictures by Alexander: a portrait of St. Simon and a group of mares and foals. Anyone who

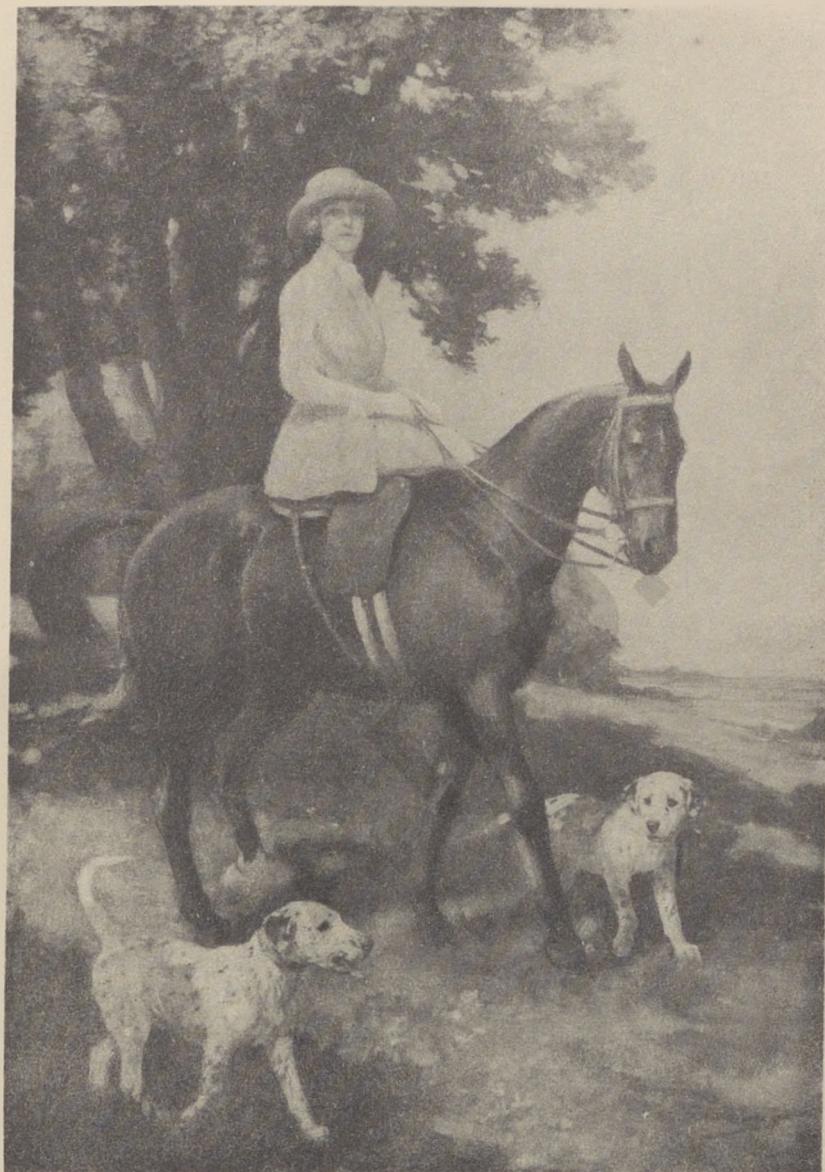
Musical Society in Edinburgh

would like to see horses painted as they ought to be should look at these.

A contemporary of Alexander's, Lawton Windgate, R.S.A., himself a very good landscape painter, once remarked of Alexander in my hearing that there was only one man who could use a brush as he could, and that was Velasquez.

We philistines used to say that old-fashioned Edinburgh, with its well-ordered society, existed on the reputation for culture it had had in the days of Sir Walter Scott, but for all that I liked it and was happy there. I was devotedly fond of music, and having a passable tenor voice, my spare time was enjoyably filled up by belonging to a club of friends, not artists, which used to meet in the houses of various members. There we studied concerted singing under a professional conductor, and, as is usual, ended the season with a concert composed of the music we had been working upon. Schumann's "Paradise and the Peri" I shall always remember, as I was promoted to sing the tenor solos, which was not as grand as it may sound, as he has all the descriptive passages of recitative to sing, and little or no aria. I do not suppose I did very well, but it encouraged me.

I never missed hearing anything I could in the way of music, and sang myself at a good many amateur concerts. Among these was one for which our conductor took a small company to Helensburgh to mark the opening of a new Town Hall. I always remember this occasion, as my sense of humour nearly brought disaster. I was singing a well-known duet from the opera "Trovatore," with a rather elderly spinster, in which I had to address her as my mother. When the impropriety of the situation struck me, it was nearly the cause of my undoing.



Portrait of Lady Read

Early Commissions

That I was in my teens then and always rather strung up on such occasions is my excuse.

There was another lady, certainly the star of that concert, whom I did not know personally, but only by a very apt nickname some one had saddled her with. She really was, for an amateur, a very fine singer, and, being the wife of a big dealer in game, fish, etc., she was known as "Oyster Patti." There certainly was some fun to be got out of singing, apart from its musical side.

I think from what I have observed, few artists are without appreciation of music, and I believe it is one of the relaxations which blend with the artist's life better than any other. The arts all have some kind of relation to one another. In music, poetry, and any other art, there is the equivalent to colour, tone, composition, harmony, and all component parts, and something of the same kind of enjoyment to be got out of them, they touch the senses, and music perhaps most of all.

About this time I was painting a good many pictures. Some of them sold, and they got me commissions to paint portraits, of dogs and horses mostly. One of these was a rather ambitious effort; it was to paint two little girls on horseback. I had to go to Fife to do this. Their father, a cousin of the late General Haig, lived and sometimes hunted there, but more often took his horses down to the Pytchley, where he was well known as a very hard man to hounds. Having no fear himself, he expected the same of others, and accordingly took it for granted that they also had none.

At that time my hunting opportunities had been very few, and though I never missed an opportunity to beg, borrow, or

Early Commissions

steal a ride of any kind, these very occasional efforts were far from rendering me a capable horseman, and of jumping fences I knew nothing. The morning after my arrival, my host said: "Better come and have a ride with us before you begin painting." Thrilled to the marrow I consented gladly, and we four started



"I, of course, followed"

gaily down the avenue. Half-way down he, followed by his daughters, turned off, jumped the fence which bounded it, and galloped off across country. I, of course, followed, or my horse did, and the providence which is supposed to look after children and drunken men extended its sphere and mercifully took me in hand. All the same it was a good job my companions had the grace not to look back, or I think they would have seen the most realistic imitation of a monkey on a dog that was ever offered to human gaze. During my stay there that special



Cubbing

The Hopetoun Harriers

providence never let me down. Once, after my day's work, my host told me to go to the stable and tell the stud groom to saddle a certain four-year-old. The groom questioned the order, saying that the horse bucked and had put down some of the stablemen, but as I convinced him that the order was for that particular horse, he was duly saddled and I was put up. All I can say is that, by the grace of the aforesaid providence, we returned together. I am sure the horse would have kicked himself if he had known how easily he could have called my bluff, but perhaps he enjoyed the joke.

In those days in Edinburgh there was little chance of seeing anything in the way of sport, and few among the budding artists, who were my daily associates, would have cared if there had been. But one day comes to mind when I did see hounds. One exception among my art student friends in their apathy towards sport was Jack Parsons, and, on the particular day referred to, he and I had gone out into the country to see a meet of harriers, of which Lord Hopetoun was Master. I think it took place at Hopetoun House. I can recall little of the day's doings beyond an incident which occurred shortly after they moved off. A hare was found, and the line she took led over a brook which ran near the park. The field of horsemen galloped after hounds until this obstacle barred the way. I don't suppose it was over twelve feet wide, but that is the size that an old authority once said would stop the best field in Leicestershire; in this case it certainly did in Midlothian, enabling us foot-sloggers to get there. Everyone was looking for "a better 'ole," when we trotted up and Jack Parsons took it in his stride. I shall never forget how they looked at him, quite unaware of a fact which I knew, that he, at the moment, held the world's

Robert Paterson of Birthwood

long-jumping record of something over twenty-two feet. This, of course, has since been surpassed, but it made the twelve-foot brook a mere hop for him. I waded through.

I have already said that my father hunted, and so for lack of another reason I put my taste for such things down to heredity. The same explanation may account for another of my failings, shooting. None of my mother's family, so far as I know, hunted, but all the men shot, and most of them did it well. I certainly inherited the taste though not, I regret to say, the skill. I remember my uncle, a notable shot, taking me, at a very early age, ferreting rabbits, which then literally swarmed on his estate in the Upper Ward of Lanarkshire. It was a lesson to be remembered. Although it became almost monotonous, every rabbit died instantly, shot clean through the head; no misses and no bungling. The most rabid anti-blood-sport maniac could not have said a word.

The same uncle, Robert Paterson, known, as was the custom then, as "Birthwood," from the name of his property, was well known in coursing circles, and had a nomination in the Waterloo Cup. He coursed for many years and spent much money on the sport, but never had the luck to win any of the big stakes. I used sometimes to go to meetings with him, and so was introduced to yet another field sport. On one occasion I witnessed a rather curious incident, illustrating how the dice may be loaded against success. A very good-looking young dog of his, in running his first public course, lay behind his adversary all the way, and never seemed to try to make a point. Disgusted, Birthwood consigned him to a warmer region, and said aloud, "Anyone can have the brute, for five shillings!" His butcher, standing behind him, said, "I'll have him,"



Pounded

A Waterloo Cup Incident

tendered the sum, and took the dog, attributing his failure to a feed of meat, perhaps bought at his own shop, he entered him in an over-night stake, which he won easily next day.

So far as I know, my father was not interested in coursing, but I can remember him referring to an incident seen on the only occasion when he went to the Waterloo Cup meeting. This greatest event of the coursing season takes place near Liverpool. The ground consists of flat fields intersected for drainage purposes by big boggy ditches. At the time referred to these were jumped by the keepers and officials by means of poles, and crossed by the spectators, when changing ground, on small bridges of wood, which being rather inadequate were the cause of much crowding and tedious waiting.

At one of these bridges there was a little fellow who seemed to have lunched rather well, at least as regards the liquid part of the meal. Tired of waiting, apparently, he stepped out and declared he would jump "the ruddy thing." This caused some amusement to the crowd, composed largely of bookmakers, backers, and people ready to speculate upon anything, and odds were offered that he could not do it. Nothing daunted, however, the little man divested himself of his coat and threw it, along with a small bag he carried, across the ditch. Taking a rather unsteady run he leapt, not getting much beyond the middle, where he plunged into mud and water over his knees. He was helped out, still declaring that he could easily do it. Another try with much the same result followed. Again dragged out, mud to the waist, he swore that if it took him all day he would jump it.

By this time the crowd had increased, and the excitement with it. Extravagant odds were offered against him, and there

Early Shooting Experiences

were plenty to take up the bets. Saying he had not had room enough, he demanded a clear run, and, once more addressing himself to the task, went over in a double somersault on to dry land. Then, taking up his bag, from which he produced and put on dry clothes, he proceeded to collect quite a large sum from the bookmakers. And with his friends, also much richer than they had been, departed.

It subsequently turned out that they were members of a troupe of acrobats taking a day off from their circus in Liverpool, and the signs of inebriety were a part of the play.

I knew a family in those early days whose father had a grouse moor near Strathaven on the borders of Lanarkshire and Ayrshire, and, though I had shot them elsewhere once or twice, my first real attempt at shooting driven grouse began there.

Two other boys and I used to go to the moor the night before a drive was arranged, sleeping at the farmhouse. After a rare good supper of bacon and eggs we bedded down in nice warm blankets—sheets were barred—and slept as well as excitement allowed, until some time before dawn, when somehow we always managed to awake. Scrambling into a few clothes, and getting our guns, we made for a field where the corn stooks still stood out, our intention being to get a few birds coming to feed, by a method well known to poachers. It may have been a low form of sport, but it was not entirely reprehensible and anyhow it was highly exciting. Sometimes when we started the moon would still be up, and by its light we would build shelters of stooks arranged in a circle. In these we would squat, and watch the dawn come in silvery and cold. As light increased, our nerves would be strung up by the voice of an old cock from the moor sounding his reveille, “Back-geback-aback.”



Birds running in front

Prospective Poachers

There would be a whirr of wings. "Where were they?" Not light enough to see. Shortly there would be another whirr, and there they were not twenty yards off, on a group of stooks, some on the top, some lower. Bang! and they would bob their heads. Bang! bang! and up they would go, followed by another shot as they went, generally leaving some behind. I know we ought to have been ashamed, and perhaps I should of telling it now, but there were thrills in the whole thing that one does not often get out of much more orthodox ways of shooting, and I do not regret having done it. Back to breakfast, again the unvarying menu, bacon and eggs, and never did that dish taste so good, before or since.

Afterwards the rest of the party arrived and the day was spent driving, a bag of some thirty brace being the general result, no mention being made of the foundation made before breakfast.

The father of my friends amused himself keeping some sheep which ran on the moor, and in order to improve the grazing had a lot of sheep-drains put in to dry the bogs, which were numerous. The old shepherd, commenting on this, said, "A-a-l the grouse will hae to turn paitricks [partridges]." The result, however, was quite the reverse, as in a couple of years the draining about doubled the bags of grouse, gathering in birds from all round, and improving the breeding-ground very much as well.

CHAPTER III

My First Stay in Morocco

I THINK it was in 1885 I went along with Robert Alexander and another artist to Tangier.

Painting was our ostensible object, but, thinking it over honestly, I believe that, on my part at least, there were other reasons as well, one being that I had heard a horse could be kept there for something under a shilling a day and bought for a proportionate amount. This awakened in me a hitherto unrealized craving for the animal; something in me cried, like King Richard, "A horse, a horse, my kingdom for a horse!" My kingdom at the time, consisting of some little prize-money from the R.S.A. schools, and the sale of a small picture or two, was ridiculously insufficient to buy or keep anything equine at any other known place, so Tangier seemed a heaven-sent opportunity.

Three second-class tickets in a P. and O. ship took us to the land of promise, or as near it as Gibraltar, and that voyage—my first of any distance—was an amusing one. Second-class P. and O. in those days was chiefly filled up by the servants of the first-class passengers, and these formed a society of their own. Social distinctions were exceedingly arbitrary, and were, apparently, founded on the rank of their employers. We three artists were something outside it, but as onlookers, certainly did see a lot of the game, a very diverting one.

Tangier, though just about the longitude of London, was then more purely Eastern than places much farther east, and

Arrival in Morocco

exceedingly primitive. Nothing in the way of roads existed, and no wheeled conveyance was known from one end of Morocco to the other, except a sort of cart, with solid disks of wood for wheels, which was only used on the fields.

Passengers arriving were landed in boats, being carried the last few yards on the back of a sturdy porter, generally a Jew, with hair I always remembered as disgustingly oily. There was a pervading smell which one never lost, and which would, to this day, if I encountered it, take me back to Morocco, a strange medium to an affectionate memory. I have known people who regarded the Moorish smell differently; one visitor, from Aberdeen, could scarcely wait for the next ship back, and literally shook the dust from his feet on leaving, hoping, no doubt, that the smell would go with it.

Morocco at that time was under the uncontrolled rule of the Sultan, and the methods of government were rather curious. Places of authority were sold to the highest bidder, and the official's first business was to get back, from those over whom he ruled, the price he had paid, plus a profit. There was no regular system of taxation, but any one reputed to have money, or goods worth taking, was liable to have to disburse some, if not all, of it to the man in authority, an indefinite term in a Moorish prison being the alternative. A tower at Rabat was pointed out to me, from which three such persons threw themselves to death rather than endure the horrors of their captivity. This occurred some time before my stay in Morocco, but the prisons into which I looked in various parts of the country were still sufficiently horrible. The inmates depended for food entirely on outside charity, and, if that failed, lingering death was inevitable.

Hiring a Horse

On my first visit, my passion for the horse was humoured to the modest extent of striking a bargain with a very nice old Moor who owned one only. So far as I remember, I hired this at about fifteen shillings per month, and when the first payment was due we differed as to the exact length of time a month was;



Moroccan Transport

the difference, it turned out, arose from the fact that he went by the lunar month not the calendar. It was not a great horse, but suited my inexperience, for a time at least.

Though I was greatly struck by the picturesque appearance of everything, I do not think I did any work worth much, nor in fact did Alexander; he seemed unable to shake off his devotion to the grey tones of our native Scotland, and I remember him saying that he liked Tangier best in wet weather, which struck me as extraordinary. Yet perhaps my work showed that

Our Hotel

I was also failing, though unconsciously, to tune my eye to the high tone and unfamiliar sun. The colour there came almost entirely from the sunlight, as local colour, such as in costume, etc., was rare. White houses and more or less white or brown dresses were the rule, with a spot of bright colour rare. In dull weather these formed a monochrome picture, most depressing to me, but the sun warming the white walls and casting blue shadows everywhere entirely changed it. Those who remember the London production of "Kismet" saw something more like the genuine Moroccan atmosphere than I have ever seen reproduced elsewhere. One scene, in a quiet moonlit lane, recalled to me even the smell, so "atmosphere" is literally the right word.

The so-called hotel where we stayed had a most ideal situation; it was an old Moorish house built upon the wall of the town, with a view of the bay from the upper windows, and of the whole sandy beach for two miles to the point where it was crossed by a river, and to the hills beyond. If its situation was ideal, everything else was far from being so. The owners were always on the verge of bankruptcy, if not beyond, and if one asked even for a cup of tea, a small coin for the purchase of the necessary materials had to be advanced. The cooking was so awful that it was no uncommon thing for some of us to go directly from dinner to a neighbouring wine-shop, where we could fill up on bread and cheese, washed down with some kind of wine or beer. Still we liked it; our party, of some six artists, had the place practically to ourselves, with only occasional other visitors of equally bohemian character. There was a piano, and sometimes a pianist; the best of them being a Hungarian author, who showed us how the music of his country

Moroccan Night

should be played. I have forgotten his name, but if he wrote as well as he played the piano, I should like to read his books. Looking back, I think that hotel, among many bad, was the worst I have ever known, but it was cheap, and to properly constituted lads, mostly in their early twenties, it really made very little difference whether dinner consisted of ortolans or bread and cheese. Besides, we were artists, and that view from the bedroom windows was worth many Lord Mayor's banquets. I once had a curious experience at one of these windows. Tan-



Moroccan Sheep

gier had its full complement of pariah dogs, and on a moonlight night the sandhills immediately below the wall at that point were a favourite spot from which to "bay the moon." One night a chorus of this particular form of canine music had been in full swing, and had prevented my sleeping for several hours, until, exasperated, I arose in wrath, with the intention of firing a revolver shot in the direction of the sound. I had just put my head out of the window, when, by my right ear, came

Our Language Lessons

the most awful crash! My next-door neighbour, inspired by a similar idea, had also approached his window the fraction of a second before me, and had fired his gun. No harm was done, but to have a gun unexpectedly fired within two feet of one's head on a calm still night is an experience to be remembered.

Moors are very much given to the promiscuous firing of guns; every ceremony, with the exception of a funeral, is accompanied by a *feu de joie*, sometimes, as at weddings, lasting about a week. The great Mohammedan feast or fast of Ramadan, in which for a month no food or drink is taken between dawn and sunset, was timed in Tangier by the firing of a gun from an old battery on the wall. This being near our hotel, the effect of the first firing I heard, the dawn gun, warning the faithful to cease eating, caused me at one action to jump from sleep into the middle of my room. Curiously enough, although the gun fired each dawn for a month, some subconscious instinct prevented it ever awakening me again.

Artists are not supposed to be very good business men, though I have known exceptions to this. Of one acquaintance of mine it used to be said that he took three months of the year to paint his pictures, and nine to sell them, but sell them he did. That we were not rare exceptions is illustrated by the following incident. Three of us wished to learn Spanish, as all the Jews there, and some of the Moors, speak that language. With this object we arranged for a little Spaniard to come on certain afternoons to instruct us. This he did a few times, but one day he failed to put in an appearance. When speculating as to the cause, and comparing notes, it came out that each of us had met him on the street, and that from each he had collected the entire fees due for all three. I think the departure of the



A.C.



Running for Blood

A Gunman in Morocco

Gibraltar boat coincided with this occurrence. The sum involved was not a large one, and the laugh we had about it was worth the money. Needless to say we never met him again.

Being more or less a law unto oneself had its charm, but it also had the drawback of making Tangier a place of refuge for the very sweepings of other more civilized places; no passport was necessary for admission, and the law, if there was any, was not very wide awake. I knew of several murders, but never heard of any of the criminals being caught. It just was nobody's business.

During one of my subsequent visits to Tangier, I made the acquaintance of a particularly repulsive youth who, taking advantage of this freedom, and of the fact that he was an American, had somehow got into association with our sporting set. His language, though foul, was almost interesting, being the lowest kind of Yankee argot, which we had never before heard. Always carrying a "gun," he would bet even money he could put a bullet through a thrown-up hat, and generally he won. We heard afterwards that he was doing a kind of world tour on the proceeds of a big diamond robbery in New York. Unfortunately for him, he had only cashed a small part of the swag, and the police, tracing the rest to the luggage room of an hotel, sat and waited until his return, thus cutting down his tour considerably and providing him with lodgings at Government expense for a long time. He was the only type of gangster I have ever had the pleasure of meeting, and the sample was enough.

Recalling some of the curious characters met with in Tangier reminds me of one I never saw, but heard a great deal about during one of my visits. A company had been formed with

Society in Tangier

the hopeful idea of making Tangier a second Monte Carlo. The beginning was not very imposing if the idea was ambitious.

The manager, treasurer, croupier, or whatever he was called, was a little Frenchman about whom I was told many tales, one of which at least remains in my memory. It had reference to his one and only participation in the sport of pig-sticking. He and some other horsemen were surrounding a wounded boar at bay, when the animal, making a final dying rush at his horse, caused it to shy violently to avoid the charge, and, in so doing, to unseat the rider and deposit him plumb on the top of the boar. When rescued, to his great delight, the animal was found to be dead, enabling him to claim the final honours, which modesty did not prevent him from accepting.

Pig-sticking seemed to be only one of his sporting pursuits, and sea fishing was another; until, one day, he failed to return from a fishing expedition. Inquiry elucidated the fact that a small black bag had been part of his impedimenta, and further inquiry, that a boat had left the port during the forenoon.

The gaming saloon did not open, and nothing further was heard of the missing sportsman. Rumour said there were some who mourned his departure—and that of the black bag even more.

The diplomatic representatives of the various countries had their residences at Tangier, and when required went to Fez to the court of the Sultan. They naturally formed the bulk of what would be called the society of Tangier. At that time, Sir Kirby Green was the British minister, and from him and his family I received great kindness. Among other things I was afforded the opportunity to shoot my first wild boar. I have



Pig-sticking

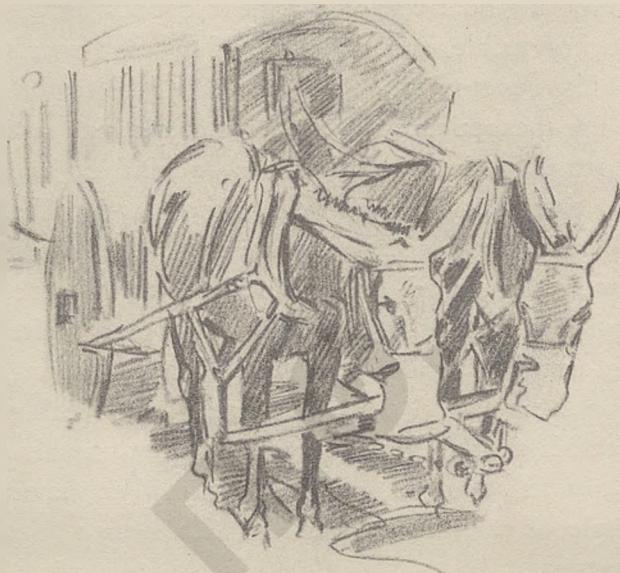
Shooting Boar

always understood that the sporting rights, if you could call them that, were vested in the Diplomatic Corps by the Sultan, and though, as a matter of fact any one seemed to be allowed to shoot anywhere, the bigger organized shoots were nearly always arranged by some one connected with one of the Legations. Shooting boar was only done in country in which riding was then impossible, and the scene of my first boar shoot was among hills, covered with gum cistus and palmetto scrub. It was, to my inexperienced eyes, very interesting; a wild lot of beaters, armed variously with sticks—a kind of knobkerrie—and some with flint-lock guns with long gas-pipe barrels, met us at the appointed place. We were each given our stance, the beaters were dispatched, and the beat begun. Warned to keep quiet and not to smoke, we took cover and waited events. A Moor, armed with one of these flint-lock weapons, took up a position by me, and when I opened my breech to load, I remember his trying, by signs, to convey to me his sympathy that my gun had broken, and his surprise when, having slipped in a couple of cartridges, it closed with a snap apparently as good as ever.

There were shots at other points, but nothing came to me until near the end of the beat, when, after a great disturbance in front of my position, a small boar broke cover and made best haste to pass between the next gun and myself. More by good luck than good guidance, I rolled him over—my first boar! It appeared, however, that the next gun had fired simultaneously, and believed that his was the fatal shot. The matter, however, was decided in my favour by Sir Kirby, as standing where we were, the shots must have come from opposite sides of the animal, and as he demonstrated at the time, and I learnt

An Incident at Dinner

from later experience, the shot which had passed right through had made the small hole of entry on my side, and the large one of exit on the other. We shot with ordinary guns and cartridges loaded with a round ball, so they were not very accurate, and such a shot was lucky.



Ellenola
2 Jun 1913

One occasion, when dining at the Embassy, I got a good laugh out of a friend with whom I had gone; a brother of the brush, I will call him M. M. was sitting opposite me, talking to a lady, when force of habit, necessary in our daily life at the hotel, made him take up his plate and, in absence of mind, vigorously polish it with his table napkin. I shall never forget his consternation when his eye caught mine. M. was a native

I Leave Morocco

of Aberdeen and a portrait painter of some merit. More than once, friends of his from the Granite City visited us in passing, and one, at least, demonstrated a trait with which the inhabitants of that city are, perhaps unjustly, credited. The individual in question came into our hotel after having dined elsewhere, rather too well, and seeing the table laid for next day's lunch, he was seized with a desire to break all the glass thereon. He expressed this wish to the waiter, adding that he would like to know in advance how much damages they would charge him afterwards. The price mentioned sobered him, and the glass was saved.

I do not remember how long this, my first visit to Tangier, lasted but it terminated, as did later ones, when my money ran out, and the necessity of making some more sent me back to Edinburgh. Life there varied little: work, music, and occasional visits to execute some commission. It is pleasant to be able to record that often shooting or fishing invitations followed a chance visit to do some work for people who had been strangers to me before, but who often became close and lasting friends.

CHAPTER IV

London, Phil May and Early Hunting Days

IN 1890 I sent a picture to the Royal Academy in London, and by some miscarriage of justice got it hung on the line, and, more curious still, very well noticed in the Press. I was greatly pleased, and, if I had had any business sense, I should have, as the saying goes, struck when the iron was hot, but I did not follow up the success. I sold the picture, spent the money, and returned to the old groove.

About this time, I had my first real chance to see and do some hunting. This was due to the kindness of a friend, for whom I had some time before painted the portrait of a hunter. Tom Scott Anderson was his name, and he was the Master of the Jed Forest Hounds, a small hill country on the outskirts of the Duke of Buccleuch's on the Scots Borders. A rare scenting country it was, but rough and a good deal wired from a riding point of view, but I was far from critical, nor was I, in fact, experienced enough to know good from bad, and it was heaven to me. To start from kennels with hounds, and come back with them in the evening, tiding sometimes a good hireling, sometimes one of T.S.A.'s own, what could a young lad ask better?

Besides being a first-rate man to hounds, and a good huntsman, Tom Anderson was something of a poet. He used to say that the jig-jog on the road coming home always moved him to making verse; he admitted that it might sometimes be a bit lame,

Anstruther Thomson

but, then, so at times were the horses that inspired it. About this time we collaborated in a book he called *Holloas from the Hills*, really a collection of T.S.A.'s verses which I illustrated. It ran into a second edition, and as we had agreed that profits from its sale were to be devoted to the "Hunt Servants Benefit Society," that most deserving association benefited considerably. We occasionally had a day's hunting with the Duke of Buccleuch's, which was most enjoyable. Will Shore was the huntsman then and for many years after. He was a great character, full of dry humour, as honest as the day, and very outspoken. One day we went to a meet at the kennels at St. Boswells, and, having some time to spare, went in to see Shore. Anderson introduced me, and added, by way of identification, "the man who does pictures of us." Shore just looked at me with his little twinkling eyes, and said, in his broad Scots, "Isn't thaat the kind of pearson we generally avoid?"

I am not sure if it was with the Buccleuch or the Jed Forest that one day I met and talked to a man who formed a link with times that seem now very long past. It was Anstruther Thomson, one of the famous hunting characters of old. I have seen him described as the best Master that ever was. He was Master of the Pytchley 1864 to 1869, also for two periods of the Atherstone, and three times of the Fife Hounds. He rode through the historical Waterloo run when Master of the Pytchley, riding four horses during the course of it, and bringing hounds home himself, I think over thirty miles, all the staff having got thrown out, or been left by the way. I have heard it said that for all his brilliant reputation as a horseman, he never galloped at a fence. I suppose there is good authority for this statement, but it is difficult to understand how, if it is true, he so successfully



Tally-ho back

crossed the strongly fenced Pytchley country. He was a very tall, heavy man, but a fine horseman. At the time I met him he was a very old man, and almost blind; but still loving to hear the hounds he could not see, he managed to do so with the help of his wife, much his junior, who rode before him. When riding alongside him then, I remember her saying, "There's a branch," and his putting up his arm to feel for it. It was rather pathetic to see a man, once so famous across country, reduced to that.

Speaking of the Jed Forest Hounds recalls an incident of which Anderson told me. They were meeting by invitation, in the Duke's country, a lawn meet, so called; and T.A. and his whip *en route* to the meet, were making a short cut up a grass lane, when a fox jumped up almost under the hounds' noses. Away they went hell for leather, impossible to stop,

John Gilpin of the Jed Forest

heading for the park where the invitation was to be. They arrived there full cry and, like John Gilpin, overshot the meeting place, where many were off their horses enjoying border hospitality, T.A. and whip galloping hard behind but still beat by the hounds. His description of the scrambling on to horses, and the "where's my horse, my hat or my whip," that ensued, was, as can be imagined, a rare mix-up. The fact that they had a good day afterwards compensated somewhat, but it was a long time before it was forgotten "How the Jed Forest arrived at Mellerstain."

Scott Anderson's only daughter is now the wife of Will H. Ogilvie, the poet, well known in Australia, and to most sportsmen in this country for his verses dealing with all sports in which horses take a part.

In the same year as the events recorded above, I tried my luck in London for a time. It was before photography had quite captured all the "news" illustration required by the weekly papers. William Small was still in his prime, and had pretty well all the work he wanted at big prices. I tried to get into doing subjects which included animals, and hawked about such things in Fleet Street, usually being told to imitate some one else, a very common idea with editors to this day. I did not take the advice, however, and sometimes had luck. The *Graphic* was the favourite paper with most of us beginners, the reason being that they paid each week, and there was no long waiting until publication. The first drawing I had published in London was one taken by them. This was a great event, which moved me to hospitality to the extent of taking a less fortunate friend to dinner. I don't think it ran to use of the wine list, but "BEER IS BEST," as the advertisements say



A leaf from Phil May's Sketch-book

Phil May

now. I had a small studio in Fulham Road, and did a good deal of painting at the Zoo, but nothing interesting enough to remember.

Then I made the acquaintance of Phil May, one of the best-hearted fellows that ever lived, I think, a great artist, and a real humorist. His studio was always a favourite place of call, and he and his wife the kindest of people. Well or ill—and he was not strong—he had always a joke ready. One of these comes across my mind as I write. Mrs. May was feeding a canary when I came in; Phil, seedy, was reclining in a chair. I heard him say, “Why am I like that bird, *Lil?*” She, “I don’t know, Phil.” “Because I’m pretty dicky.” Not, perhaps, a great jest, but just typical of Phil trying to raise a laugh when feeling under the weather. Those who knew Phil May only in his down-town mood, if it can be so called, did not know the real nature of the man. I have heard him, when quietly at home, read or repeat some little bit of quite serious verse, as I should be glad to be able to do; also, though almost without voice, sing a serious song in a way that showed he appreciated every part of it. Open-hearted, and open-pocketed, he was imposed upon and sponged upon shamefully. He knew it, but that never changed him. I recall his saying to me once, what might almost have been his motto: “Every one’s a good fellow till you know him,” and another time, “If I’d all the money I’ve *lent*, I’d be a rich man.” Nothing was ever truer.

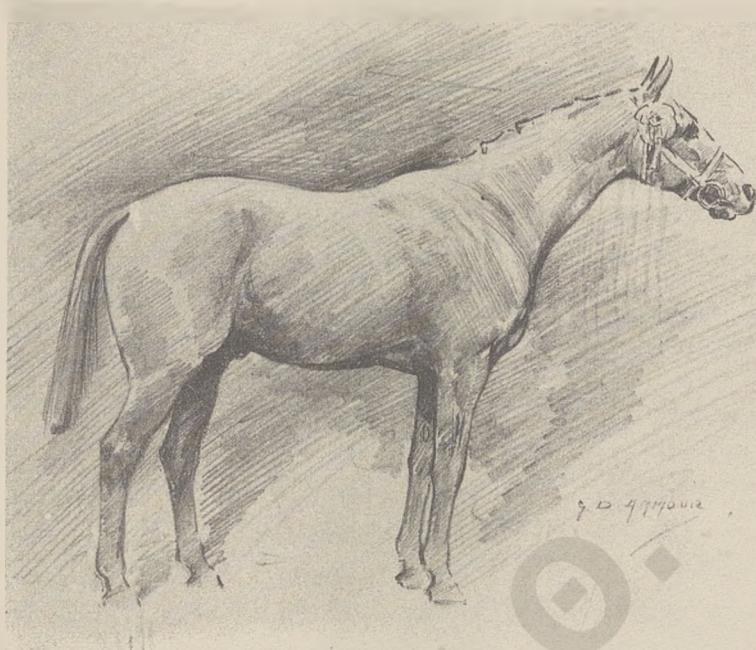
He once asked me to ride to Richmond with him, wanting my opinion of a horse he was trying with the idea of purchase. A hireling was produced for me somewhere in Kensington, and we set out, Phil on the prospective purchase. I would not do that ride now if highly paid for it, but then it was just

Phil May

possible. Anyhow, we arrived at Richmond, the Star and Garter, I think it was; the landlord, at the time, was an old friend of mine, Tom Macknee, whose father, Sir Daniel, had been President of the Royal Scottish Academy. We had some tea, but no strong drink, and issued to the stable-yard to return home. I mounted, and Phil, who was then no horseman, in essaying to do the same, overdid the effort required, and, but for the ostler's helping hand, would have completed the circus clown's favourite manœuvre of mounting one side and falling over the other. However, balance was recovered and we issued to the road. Phil's first remark was, "I hope that ostler thought I was tight." It was certainly an apt illustration of the old saying that an Englishman would rather have his morals doubted than his horsemanship.

Nothing I have ever seen written about Phil May can do justice to his kindness of heart. I do not think he ever thought of himself at all, but if he could help any one in any way he would go out of his way to do it. Known to every one in the artistic, theatrical, or musical world, he got many people their first chance. In my own case he urged me to send, and keep on sending contributions to *Punch*, saying that he would see that they were considered. That was during F. C. Burnand's editorship, when May was doing brilliant work, and Burnand was a sympathetic editor.

Of what you might call Phil May's convivial life I knew something, but not at first hand, and, unless one could convey the charm of the man in all circumstances, it would not be fair to write about it. It simply was a part of Phil May; wherever he was, humour and kindness reigned, and if the seeds of the tragedy which shortened his life were there, they were in the



A Premium Stallion

COCK OF THE WALK, chestnut (16.0 $\frac{3}{4}$), foaled in 1907.

Sire—Jeddah.

Dam—Game Hen, by Gallinule.

Phil May

shadow unnoticed. Phil told me one story which I think I may repeat, though to do it justice requires his telling. It occurred when he was in Australia, working for the *Sydney Bulletin*. Phil had been away somewhere, but returned to Sydney on receipt of a telegram from the paper asking him to attend the first night of a play. He arrived just in time to go to the theatre, without calling at the flat where he and his wife lived. After the play followed some kind of celebration supper to the players, in which Phil, of course, joined. This made the time of getting home very late, so, not wishing to awaken his wife, he went in without a light, undressed, and crept into bed. Waking when daylight began to come, he turned over, to find to his horror that the person occupying the bed with him was not Mrs. May, but an intimate friend of hers, a lady who, like himself was on the staff of the *Bulletin*, and had been called back to town, as he had, to attend the first night. Phil's description of how he crept out of bed, inch by inch, gathered his clothes, and opened the door a hair's-breadth at a time, dreading the slightest creak, dressed on the landing, and stole away, was a masterpiece of dramatic description. All went well, however, and the explanation turned out to be that, in Phil's absence, Mrs. May had been staying with another friend out of town, and, unaware that Phil had been recalled, she had told her journalist friend to use the unoccupied room. He did not say if the lady in question was ever told of the incident.

I heard Phil once refer to his nose as the scarlet runner; and he once told us how, one Sunday, he had gone down to a livery stable where he kept a hack, and, remembering an engagement in the afternoon, asked an ostler to get a neighbouring barber to come up to shave him. The man replied that he did not think

Phil May

he would come on Sunday. Phil then said, "Tell him I'll give him half a crown to come," and overheard another of the ostlers say, *sotto voce*, "Fancy spending 'arf a crown on a fice like that!"

I believe half these Phil May stories are apocryphal, although he was quite capable of making some of them up himself.

I can, however, vouch for the truth of the following, as he told me the day it occurred. It was when he was working for the *Daily Graphic*, I think shortly after he came to London. He had gone on instructions from the paper to make sketches of a Chinese giant called Chang, who was at some circus or music-hall. After doing a sketch or two, a bright idea struck him, he asked Chang to place his hand flat upon the page of the sketch-book and traced round it until he came to the thumb; he paused, "That'll make two columns"—they were paid by the column. "Here, Chang, put out your thumb. Another column!" and probably a couple of pounds extra fee.

The Zoo, at that time, was a favourite place for some of us budding animal-painters to work, and I put in a lot of time there. It was not nearly so popular with the general public then as now, when I am sure the attendance is often as much in a day as it used to be in a week. I sometimes met J. M. Swan, R.A., who painted very fine animal pictures. He was very kind, and on several occasions gave me useful advice about drawing wild animals, especially lions, of which he knew much. He is, of course, dead now, but I often think I would like to see a collection of his pictures exhibited, my recollection of them being that they were very good indeed. For a time there was a young Scottish animal-painter, a fellow student with me in Edinburgh, working at the Zoo; I will not name him as he is



Zoo Sketches

The Clydesdale Harriers

still going strong, I am glad to say, and might be offended if I tell a story in which he figures. A mutual friend of ours was looking for him one day, and asked various keepers if they had seen him. I should mention that the artist spoke rather broad Scots, had red hair, rather untidily kept, and was altogether a noticeable figure in Cockneyland. One of the keepers, from whom our friend was inquiring, asked him to describe the party, which he did, and at once got the answer: "Oh, the foreigner? He's gone up to the monkey house."

I used, periodically, to return to Scotland, and during one of these times I did several portraits of hounds belonging to a pack called the Clydesdale Harriers. It gave me a chance to study hounds, and I spent a lot of time in the kennels, sometimes painting for myself, sometimes for the Master. It was about the first pack to begin breeding the dwarf foxhound instead of the old harrier type, which is interesting from the fact that so many have now followed that lead. They were kennelled near Hamilton, and the Master was Major Robertson Aikman, a coal-owner in that country. An incident, which I think must be unique, took place while I was there. The kennel huntsman, Harry Holland, was in hospital, very ill, and a card was sent out to the subscribers saying that, owing to his death, hounds would not meet until further notice. But Harry Holland was not dead, and did not die at that time at all, he may even be alive still for all I know, and certainly I hope so.

I was living then at our old home near Glasgow, and being in that city one day, went into a horse-sale yard and bought an old, white pony; it was the first horse of any kind I had owned. It was picturesque, but otherwise pretty useless, and when I got it home my purchase was received with anything but enthusiasm.

Horse-breaking under Difficulties

My sisters loved anything in the shape of an animal, even that pony, but an old Yorkshire horse-breaker called Gardner, who rented a house and most of our stables, was moved to laughter. I painted a picture of the old pony, however, and promptly sold it, also the pony. The latter for, I may admit, half the price it cost me, but on the balance it paid, and I had the laugh on my side. When I told the Yorkshireman, whose business was not then very thriving, he said, with heartfelt accent, "I wish I could paint *my 'osses!*" That old Yorkshireman was of great service to me, as along with the young ones he had to break, he would occasionally buy a cheap horse on speculation, and was glad to turn an honest crown by hiring it to me to hack about; he got something towards the corn bill, and I, cheap riding. John Gardner, the breaker, arrived one night with a miscellaneous gang of helpers and an even more miscellaneous lot of horses. Some one he knew had bought the residue of a cargo of bronchos, which had just been landed from a ship and sold by auction in Glasgow. A dozen had not found purchasers—these were they, bought *en bloc* after the sale proper! A big cow-house received them for the night, and sufficed to keep them until morning, though only just, as when day came, and the door was opened, all were found to have slipped their halters. With ordinary horses used to handling this would not have mattered, but these wild brutes were a different thing altogether. Bunched together and facing outwards, they struck with forefeet at any one who went near them, just about the height of a man's head, and no one could halter them from the ground without risking his life. Ultimately we did it by creeping along the rafters above them, slipping a noose over the head of each, taking it a turn round a post, and literally choking them up to



*Training a Polo Pony: A lesson in "flexing" the neck
shown me by W. Balding*

A Dog's Jealousy

it, then substituting a halter securely fitted, and the trick was done. They all broke quite well, I think, but beginning it was a rough job. Needless to say, I enjoyed thoroughly that catching, but, having to go away, I did not share the subsequent proceedings.

Old Gardner had, in youth, been a jockey to Lord Glasgow, who was a well-known racing man. He was a fine horseman, but with rather a curious seat, and this incidentally illustrated how imitative one may be when young. A young brother of mine was just learning to ride, and made such progress that Gardner used, when breaking horses, to put my brother up the first time they were mounted, a very critical moment which always seemed to come off all right. The curious thing about it was that Alfred, my brother, rode exactly like old Gardner to the smallest particular of his seat, and to see both mounted it looked as if each was trying to caricature the other.

This young brother had, at that time, a pony I had given him, which was nearly the victim of the jealousy of a dog. It was a bulldog which the breaker had boarded with him. A gentle friendly beast in a general way, it, in common with others of the breed I have known, one day developed a fit of jealousy. Seeing my brother harnessing the pony, the dog suddenly sprang at it, the pony dashed from the stable pursued by the dog, and, no doubt, would have escaped but for stumbling over some sticks, when the bulldog fastened on its elbow and hung on. My brother's shouts brought the old breaker, who knocked the dog down with a post he had picked up. I tell this story as a warning to owners of these dogs, as it is not the only case I have known of their sudden jealous outbreaks. Another killed a toy dog of my mother's with which it was quite friendly,

Tramp Models

and I knew of a third fastening on the nose of a horse with which it usually went exercising. Any one, I believe at, say, a dog show, might safely handle every bulldog on the bench, but never keep one with a small child or anything on which you lavish affection.

I mentioned a pony as the first horse I ever possessed, but a donkey I previously bought, being Irish, would probably claim that she really was my first. The brother I have referred to began to ride on her, and taught her to jump so well that we ultimately had to get rid of her as no fence in the district could keep her in, and she had a troublesome partiality for other folk's cornfields. She was presented to a great bazaar, held in Glasgow, and raffled there after the sale of twenty pounds' worth of tickets.

When at home, then, I painted a picture of a poacher and some dogs. My sisters being of a very charitable disposition, there was an almost endless queue of tramps on most days of the week, drinking coffee or tea, and throwing away the bread given to them as soon as they got out of sight. I therefore had no difficulty in getting a suitable model for the picture. The gentleman fixed upon showed a good deal of nervousness about leaving a pictorial record behind him, even suggesting that it would be a bit awkward if the police ever happened to want him. He seemed to look at it as something like having his finger-prints taken. The two days I had with him were rather interesting; he was a born wanderer, and told me stories of a time when he had been in South America, done a little work here and there, but always, for some reason or another, wandered on. I could verify the fact that he really had been there, as he could speak Spanish, enough of which I also knew to



9. Engr.

A King Premium House

The Hunters' Improvement Society Show

Α.Π.Θ.

Tramp Models

check his. He never put down his evident passion for change of scene to something in himself, but always professed some good reason for moving: a bad master, too much pistol-shooting, etc., etc. I think he enjoyed his two days' sitting, and tramped off, a few shillings the richer, as if fulfilling his destiny. I have always had rather a liking for the real tramp, or at least a certain sympathy for such as my model. The out-of-work man really looking for a job is not naturally a wanderer; he has not the faculty, imagination, or whatever you may call it that is necessary, and lacking that, his case is a tragedy, and his company, consequently, depressing. Long years ago, when walking with the late George Halkett, who, at the time, was writing for the *Pall Mall Gazette* a series of interviews with all kinds of people encountered in the country, we met a typical "wanderer"; I made a sketch of him and G.H. talked to him. It went like this: What was he by trade? An agricultural labourer. How long had he been out of work? Twelve years. Why? Agricultural depression. He told us he had a regular round, and knew almost exactly what each house was good for; here a few potatoes, there some bread, another place a cup of tea, sometimes a copper or two. He explained that his round was a wide one, so as not to revisit any place until he was forgotten. He had a good knowledge of history, and seemed to have had a good education. A rather delicate-looking man, of about fifty-odd I should say, with a long beard, who spoke well, seemed perfectly harmless, and was, I suppose, equally useless.

There must be many people who remember George Halkett, when, with Lord Ernest Hamilton, he edited the *Pall Mall Magazine*, and wrote for the *Pall Mall Gazette*. An exceedingly clever man, handicapped by an affection of the spine which

George Halkett

entailed constant suffering for many years, and ultimately was the cause of his death. In the heyday of Gladstone's political career, G.H., when lying ill in bed in Edinburgh, wrote and illustrated some very clever little books caricaturing Gladstone and his policy. They were a very valuable contribution to Conservative propaganda, the *Irish Green Book* being the best, I think. He was a wonderful all-round man, and a dear friend of mine.

The worst of writing reminiscences is that it tends to lead one into telling of people who are dead, and introduces a note of sadness which the casual reader may feel depressing, so, like the bad boy, I'll promise not to do it again—till next time, anyway.



CHAPTER V

Memories of the Tangier Hunt

TANGIER and Morocco, in those early days, bulk largely in my recollection, although it was some two years after my first visit before I was able to return there. I had heard much talk about some of the coast towns down the Atlantic side, particularly of Rabat, and I went to Tangier resolved to get there somehow. Rabat itself was not a favourite place of call for ships owing to a bar across the river, which, more often than not, prevented lighters making communication with them. I found, however, that I could get to Casablanca, the next port farther south, and there I went. I learned from a trading firm there, to whom I went for advice, that a soldier of the Sultan had just come in from Rabat escorting a traveller, and that he was returning next day, taking back the horse the other man had ridden, also a baggage mule. Nothing could have suited me better. A little bargaining, and we arranged to start next morning, and duly did about six a.m.

According to the ruling Sultan's laws at that time, unless a traveller took a Moorish soldier with him journeying, the Sultan did not take any responsibility for his safety. I had not intended any such extravagance—it cost a few shillings, so far as I remember—so, by chance, I was acting quite according to law. Though I cannot say I felt much confidence in my escort, still he had a gun of sorts, though it was a flint-lock, which,

Journey to Rabat

between pulling the trigger and its going off, would almost afford time for the marauder's escape.

It was a two days' ride, and about half way there was a fondak, where travellers stayed the night: that is an enclosure, walled round, and with a small guard of Moorish soldiers, such as they were, in charge of the gate. The flat country near the sea, over which the track lay, was rather monotonous, and the usual travelling pace, a walk, not very exciting. We plodded on and overtook some camels in charge of a man riding one, and the reason why so few people appeared to ride camels in that country became quite plain to me after riding several miles beside him. From what I saw, I agree with the old gentleman in the story of the sedan-chair out of which the bottom had fallen, who said, "If it were not for the honour of the thing, I would rather walk." I have not seen the riding camel of farther east, but riding the Morocco variety seemed to be about the stiffest test of physical endurance I have ever seen.

About midday we came to a river, but, as the tide was high, it was pronounced unfordable. It did not look very deep, and, being very hot and dusty, I thought I might profitably combine a bathe with an investigation of the ford, so, going some way up, I undressed and swam down to where our little caravan waited the turn of tide. There I sounded the passage and proved that we could easily get over, thus saving some hours of daylight. In good time we reached the fondak, where I unpacked and set up my little tent. This was done very imperfectly, as, in my bathe I must have got a slight sunstroke, which manifested itself in a terrible headache. Along with us in the enclosure were some other native travellers and a herd of cattle; some of these latter, during the night, got among my tent

Journey to Rabat

ropes and brought the whole thing down on top of me, but I felt too ill to attend to trifles like that, so lay until morning, slept a little, and rose much better.

The second day was very much a repetition of the first, and in good daylight we saw Rabat in the distance, like a town carved out of ivory, tinged with the warmth of the afternoon sun. Before starting my journey I had met a ship's captain of my acquaintance, who had pressed on me a letter of introduction to the Vice-Consul at Rabat, aptly named Frost. I was still feeling the effects of my sunstroke, but, armed with my letter of introduction, I presented myself at the Vice-Consul's house, feeling sure I should be offered a shakedown of some kind for the night. His help, however, only extended to offering the services of his clerk, to show me where to camp, which, incidentally, was in the graveyard. This was, to do it justice, not so bad as it sounds, being a large expanse of ground lying between the outer and inner walls surrounding the town. It had one "grave" drawback, however, it was the breeding-place of a large number of pariah dogs, which dug into the graves, and used the excavations as kennels for their numerous families, the mothers of which would issue like raging lions if one chanced to go near the den. I camped there for the best part of a week, the Basha sending down four Moorish soldiers each night as a guard. They might tend to safety, but were not conducive to sleep, as they seemed to spend most of the night talking, smoking and spitting. Through the kind offices of the Consul's clerk I had got a servant, a most necessary adjunct to life in Rabat. He was by birth extremely distinguished, being acknowledged as coming of the family of the Prophet. I rather doubted this, in spite of the green head-cord

Walter Rottenburg

he wore, until I heard the Mayor of the town address him as "Seedi," or Sir. Fancy being served by a prophet at something like eightpence per day! Towards the end of my week, I was surprised to receive a visit from a stranger, a German gentleman of portly figure. After formal greetings, he broke out with "Ach, damp my eyes, you cannot stay here, my friend, you come live with me. I have not a room in my house, but you bring your tent, we put him in the *patio*, yes?"

Thus began a friendship which lasted for years, with one of the biggest men I have ever known, with a voice to match, and a heart as big—Walter Rottenburg. It turned out that Rottenburg, a military engineer, was building a fort for the Sultan. I lived with him for several months, and was able to return his kindness, if to a very small extent, by nursing him in a very bad turn of malaria. His kindness made all the difference between success and failure of that expedition to Rabat, and is one of my happiest memories.

While there I painted a big picture, *Powder Play*, which I afterwards sold at home.

Rottenburg had a horse, which he never used, so he even beat the other "Good Samaritan," who only had an ass on which to put the poor man he succoured. His cook was a Hadji, having made the pilgrimage to Mecca in expiation for killing a man. He was a good cook, but I heard later that his old habit returned in spite of the sanctity acquired by the pilgrimage, as, finding an enemy asleep, he poured paraffin over him and set it alight. I mention these details simply to illustrate the ways of Morocco in those days, not to be sensational.

Towards the termination of W.R.'s malarial attack, a ship

Salee

turned up off the town, and, as I was due to leave, I prevailed on Rottenburg to accompany me as far as Tangier. That my prescription was the right one was demonstrated within ten minutes of setting foot on board, when he immediately asked if they had any lager beer; and when it was produced, tackled it as only a German can. As the ship spent the day rolling in a big Atlantic swell, I regret to say I was soon occupied *au contraire* as the Frenchman said in the well-known story.

My time at Rabat had been full of interest. In those days, before there were any roads in the country, few people visited it, and, counting myself, there were only five British there. A couple of French officers, who were supposed to be teaching some Moors how to be soldiers, and a few Spaniards, represented the rest of the European residents. At first, I lived mostly on turtle doves, a flock of which could easily be found any morning, and a couple, with native brown bread, formed my daily ration. I do not know that this diet sweetened my nature as it should, but it at least saved a diet of Morocco goat from doing the reverse.

Rabat is separated by a river from Salee, in old times the headquarters of the famous pirates, the Salee Rovers, who ravaged these seas. Many of the people in my time were still very fanatical, and at times dangerous. I had one little experience of this, and it was enough to make me afterwards carry a revolver in my pocket. I wanted to do a sketch of the shoe-market, which was the chief thoroughfare of Rabat, and the only place where it was possible to sit down was a recess formed by the door of a mosque. Knowing the inviolability of these mosques in Morocco, I did not even look into it, but sat down with my back to the door. This seemed, however, to cause offence,

The Sirocco

a crowd gathered round and I was hustled and spat upon. Knowing that some one might come along who would regard putting a knife into a Christian as a first-class ticket to Heaven, I decided to beat a retreat. Fortunately a narrow alley favoured this, and I managed to bring away my painting materials in more or less good order, but I never got that sketch.

While there we had several days of sirocco—which is caused by an impalpable sand cloud which comes with an east wind. It looked like the darkest thunder cloud I have ever seen. On one evening, at sunset, this caused colour effects which it is impossible to describe. The whole air seemed to become luminous, and slightly foggy, the white houses, according to the distance they were away, varied from rich purple to the palest pink, and the sky itself showed all the colours of the rainbow. There was not a breath of moving air, and the heat was suffocating; the ordinary Moors of the street are far from taking an interest in the beauties of nature, but even they were looking and pointing at the scene. Scientific people, no doubt, would have explained that it was caused by the setting sun shining on the sand or dust that filled the air, but for the artist the sight, not the reason, is all that matters.

My return home on that occasion, in a P. & O. boat I caught at Gibraltar, always recalls an experience which deprived me of the conventional means of attaching my trousers to my person. I got the only vacant cabin in the ship, probably not by any means the best, being almost over the propeller; but that was not all. I do not much like sharing a room with any one, but in this case I shared mine with a hungry family of rats, who, on the first night, ate every scrap of the leather part of my braces. Fearing that this might only be a kind of *bors d'œuvre* to

Tangier Again

them, for the rest of the voyage I hung my boots and such things up on pegs and left my clothes on the floor at night.



A Sketch by Joseph Crawhall

After about another two years' interval, I again returned to my beloved Tangier; this time deliberately for purposes of sport in the first place, with painting a bad second. I do not know exactly how the Tangier hunt originated, but when I made

The Tangier Hunt

contact with it, Count Haro—afterwards the Duke of Frias—was hunting hounds, and his first whip was that remarkable man and very great artist, Joseph Crawhall, always known there as “Creeps.” I fell into acting second whip. We had some twelve to fourteen couple of hounds, drafts from England and Wales. They were not a very level lot, but they hunted, especially the Welsh. One, from the Calpe Hunt at Gibraltar, was, I think, unique, in that he was “gun shy.” Moors were much given to firing guns, and the sound of one, however remote, sent him home, full cry. There were no regular coverts, and we drew the open hillsides, which were covered with palmetto scrub, and found plenty of good red foxes, the same as at home. Earth-stopping in a country like that was almost impossible, and, in consequence, a mule carrying mining tools and a fox terrier, was a usual accompaniment to our party. Sometimes we met early and employed an old-fashioned way of following the early morning drag left by the fox returning home from the nightly prowl, and ultimately bolting him with the terrier. The country for the most part was composed of very steep hills, which visitors pronounced impossible to gallop down; we, however, did, or we should never have kept touch with hounds. Horses were cheap, all Barb stallions of about fifteen hands or less, which were capable of carrying much more weight than they looked like doing. Hard and sound, one never thought in buying a horse of trying him for wind, for the simple reason that one that made a noise was unknown. I have often wondered if that was owing to climate, or what it was; it certainly was not because the natives took particularly good care of them. No one rode a mare, and the result was that most of that sex had to work for their living carrying a

Pig-sticking in Morocco

pack, and the foals, from about a week old, had to follow their mothers to market and home again however far the distance might be. Much the same rule applied to the Moorish peasant women; they carried the burdens, sometimes plus a baby, while the male head of the family rode an ass. There may, however, be feminists there now.

Besides the hunting we had some very good pig-sticking. The ground for that lay about seventeen miles from Tangier, round a country called "Sharf-le-a-Kaab," I spell it as it sounded. It was a mixture of marsh, scrub, and cork woods, not the best of going, very rough and full of holes, which were the cause of much grief, but good pigs were there, and it was possible to ride them. The largest boar I saw killed measured thirty-six inches to the shoulder.

My first experience of the "mighty boar" was from a camp organized by a member of the Austrian legation, I have forgotten his name; I saw little of him as a fall early put him out of action I'm sorry to say, and the rest of us carried on. There was one of the party, Jack Green, son of the British Ambassador, who was, out and away, the best exponent of the spear we had, and the first ride after a pig I had was in his company. A very rough one it was too, so far as I was concerned. My riding experience was in favour of making my horse go where and how I wanted, but this idea was quickly to be dispelled when riding this kind of country. After a divided command had often nearly dissolved the partnership, I discovered the secret; leaving all to the horse was the only way.

About the time I was beginning to realize this fact, and when Jack Green and I were racing hell for leather behind a boar, a small, dry nullah came in our path. He got over, my pony

Pig-sticking in Morocco

struck the far bank, and we went down, skidding along in a cloud of dust, but unhurt and on the right side. Jack killed the pig a couple of hundred yards ahead, and I found my horse standing over the dead animal as interested as if he had done it himself.

I shall never forget trying to ride after pig on a horse of the aforesaid Jack Green's, which had just come from Fez, among the presents the Sultan used to give members of a Diplomatic Mission which visited him. These horses had generally been used only by soldiers travelling and for powder play. The first is conducted at a walk, the second a hard gallop ending by being pulled up in a length or two by a barbarous break-jaw bridle, head in air, and oblivious to everything else but stopping to avoid that awful bit. As may be imagined on such a two-pace horse, trying, in the cork woods, to keep a flying boar in sight was by no means an armchair ride. I had early given up any idea of carrying a spear, but had several occasions to ride after pig yelling for some one armed with the necessary weapon to come. More than once I fairly ran aground, that is galloped into bushes I could only, with difficulty, get out of backwards, and on one occasion had a young sapling catch under my knee, and catapult me off on to the broad of my back on a bush, holding on to my reins for grim death. It certainly was a wild ride, but I suffered no harm. That horse would, no doubt, come to hand ultimately, with a snaffle in his mouth and when terror of the Moorish bit was forgotten.

There were other runs of which I can remember every turn, but pig-sticking has been described by better men than I am, so I will resist the temptation.

Joe Crawhall, "Creeps," was one of the party, as he was in



JOSEPH CRAWHALL
(A portrait by G. D. Armour)

Race-meetings in Tangier

most of the sporting events in which I took part. What his previous experience was, I know not, but he was a beautiful natural horseman, and in Tangier was our champion jockey during the various times we were there together, and when any races were on the tapis, he was in great request.

Among our acquaintances was a Frenchman, son of the proprietor of what was then the best hotel. He appeared to do nothing for a living, but at the time of which I am speaking was raising some pocket money from a horse he had. There was great rivalry between him and a Spaniard, as to who owned the fastest horse, and matches at different distances were run between the two. The Frenchman's horse generally won, with Crawhall as the jockey. On the occasion of the last match I saw, the owner evidently had backed his horse for a bit more than usual, and was proportionately anxious to win, so after giving Crawhall many superfluous instructions, concluded by saying, "Dis horse he vill not stand de vip, but you can use dis," and, handing a porcupine quill a foot long, said, "you prick 'im behind de saddle." I do not know what effect it might have had on the horse, as Crawhall threw it away going to the post, but I know it nearly caused him to fall off from laughing.

We did hold a few little race-meetings, including some connected with our hunt. Some one had kindly put up a challenge "hunt cup," and Crawhall won that outright on an old horse called Dan Dancer, who, report said, had once performed the menial office of pulling a cab in Gibraltar. However that may be, he was not a Barb, but probably a cross between that and a Spanish mare. He had a hard mouth, and most of the ugly points of a Spanish horse, and was a gelding, the only one

Race-meetings in Tangier

I ever saw there. Not being able to ride light enough, I did not take part in all of these meetings, but I had some adventures myself. One was riding a horse belonging to a Spanish gentleman who was in the legation of that country.



He himself had intended to ride, but changed his mind, wisely, I think, and there was no competition for the mount. The horse was by nature a pig, that could go but would not, and no one had ever got him round a steeplechase course without his refusing and generally bolting afterwards. On race day, I determined to spring a surprise on him, and had a pair of leather discs made, studded with blunted nails, pointing inwards. These were put inside the rings of the snaffle, and we started.

The Duke of Frias

Coming to every fence, I let him just feel them, and he jumped straight as a die. The water jump, full up from rain the previous day, he sailed over, and as we came to a kind of enclosure where the spectators were, he jumped the fence opposite that, and on the instant of landing he turned at right angles straight through the crowd, and kept going about half a mile into the country before I could get a pull. I do not know what the subsequent proceedings were, as I did not get back in time to see the finish.

I saw the same horse, on another occasion, when hunted by the Master, do what I have never seen one do before or since—lie down when asked to go up a hill after hounds.

The Duke of Frias, our M.F.H., was the representative of one of the oldest families in Spain; Count Haro (the junior title) is recorded in history as fighting with the Cid against the Moors in the twelfth century. I was amused once by a visitor to Tangier who asked me who he was, saying, when told, "Oh, a Count is he? All these foreign fellows are that." His knowledge of hunting had been chiefly gained whipping in to the Pau Hounds, I think, but he was a good huntsman and a fearless horseman, as might be expected from his breeding, his mother having been Irish, a daughter of the composer, Balfe. From the female line he inherited a talent for music, and was the best amateur violinist I have ever known. Unfortunately, he had, from the other side, also inherited a passion for games of chance, a characteristic which, I believe, had cost his predecessors some of the finest property in Spain. Educated at Eton, he would have passed anywhere for a very polished English gentleman, and was, in addition, a good fellow of whom we were all very fond. I have entirely lost touch with him for years, but I hear he is still

Our Sporting Circle

alive, and I hope he is still as happy as we all used to be in those days. A trifle comes to mind connected with a fall he had when hunting, in which his hunting horn was quite flattened out. Sent to a Scotsman, the only representative there of the plumbing trade, it was skilfully returned to its original shape, and the bill came in "for mending one trumpet, four pesetas." Ever after the instrument bore that designation.

A well-known Scotch architect, Sir Rowand Anderson, had built himself a very nice house outside Tangier and, incidentally, had established a little building business there. Connected with that there were several Scots, and also a Yorkshireman called Wood. The latter, like many from that part of England, had a dry humour and a pretty wit at times, and spoke with the unmistakable accent of his county. Wood and several others were sitting outside a sort of café or wine-shop in the market-place one evening when a little cockney valet, called Nation, servant to Frias, passed, and was hailed by Wood with, "Ullo Nation!" Nation, believing that his master's title reflected on himself a social standing at least equal to Wood's, replied loftily, "I think, Mr. Wood, there is a prefix to my name?" but Wood's, "Oh! Wot is it then, dam na-a-tion?" completely routed the gentleman's gentleman.

I lived, for a short time, with Mr. Wood in a rather curious bungalow. It was made of cardboard on a wire foundation. Its chief drawback was that the whole thing acted as a sounding board, like the case of a fiddle, in fact; any one who turned over in bed was heard by every one else in the house, and a cough sounded like the trumpeting of an elephant. I had taken a delicate young brother with me, and the unrestfulness of this, coupled with the inability of even Yorkshire cooking to

Our Sporting Circle

cope with the old Moroccan trek-ox, necessitated our moving elsewhere.

Another of our little sporting circle was an American doctor, who, nevertheless, had a better knowledge of Surtees than any Englishman I have ever met. Despite this, his knowledge of hunting was exceedingly limited, and this was the occasion of an incident which I often recall.

The route to many of our meets led across a small bridge situated in a plain where there were a few clumps of scrubby palmetto undergrowth, and although the "Tabib" (Moorish for doctor) more than once remarked that he always thought it a likely place for a fox, we did not share his belief. One day Crawhall chanced to come on a native lad in the market carrying a live fox-cub of pretty full growth. This he bought, and next morning being a hunting day, dispatched it in charge of his native groom with instructions to creep under the bridge and, as we approached, to release the fox. This was carried out to the letter, and hounds, getting wind of the cub, broke away. The Tabib shouted, "Didn't I tell you!" and off we went, full cry, but horror! the man had left a length of palmetto rope attached to the fox's neck; his death was certain, and the question was who could get up before the doctor to remove the tell-tale string. Fortunately, the latter was shortsighted, and Crawhall, hurling himself into the worrying hounds, managed to remove the incriminating evidence. And so the doctor never guessed the trick, and often told the incident as showing his true hunting instinct.

Most of our small sporting community were poor men, and many were the expedients we used to "raise the wind," financially, for the benefit of the hunt. A great sportsman, God rest him, Mr. Wilson, who lived just outside Tangier, although

Raising Funds for the Hunt

he could not then hunt or even ride, in fact he shortly after died of cancer, built kennels and gave them to the hunt free of rent. We had an American as kennelman; he knew nothing of hunting, but loved dogs, and really did very well, especially after we stopped him from teaching them to sit up and beg for biscuit.

Many of the various Diplomatic Corps subscribed to the funds, and this was successfully encouraged by the institution of an evening pink coat, for use at balls and such occasions; not to have one was to be quite out of it with the fair sex, so it all brought grist to the mill. Little gymkhanas and athletic meetings, at which we pooled our winnings for the hunt fund, helped also. Hounds were fed on scraps from the butchers' stalls, an occasional dead donkey, or a paunch mixed with native brown bread. They did well on it, and often put in long days.

At one of the gymkhanas held in aid of the funds of the Tangier hunt there appeared on the programme a rather novel item, a menagerie race.

As this is not a very common form of sport, I may explain that any kind of live animal was eligible for entry, and that the race was a handicap. The conditions of running were that nothing but two short sticks should be used to guide the animal.

Who framed the handicap I do not remember, but taken seriously such a task would have shortened the life of the best official handicapper of the Jockey Club. A complete list of the entries, even if I could remember them, would be too various to recount; suffice it to say that, taking them in order of size, at one end of the list was a camel, and at the other an ant. The latter was the entry of the British Consul, a Mr. White, and the whole distance being a hundred yards he was given ninety-nine

Raising Funds for the Hunt

yards start. I think he might have won, if Mr. White's wind, for blowing the insect along the ground, had not failed. The camel really took no real interest in the race, as he seemed to remember an appointment at Fez or some equally distant place in the interior—at least he was last seen heading in that direction and never came back. There were many dog entries, but all were disqualified for having gone wrong side of the winning flag. Naturally there were others whose course was rather erratic. One at least dwells in my memory on account of a curious resemblance between the runner and his pilot. This entry was a long-legged white rooster with bright yellow legs,



Preliminary Canter

low legs, entered by a member of the Spanish legation, who also rejoiced in long legs. These he had encased in new and bright yellow polo boots and white breeches, thereby completing the resemblance. I do not think they took a conspicuous part in the race, but they were conspicuous enough when doing a preliminary canter, racing about on an erratic course of their own, pursued and pursuer, running in almost identical long and devious strides, each a caricature of the other.

No doubt there were many others worthy of record, but I was pretty busy myself steering a goose, which incidentally won. I had had some "trial gallops" so to speak, in which I

The Menagerie Race

had tumbled to the secret of guidance—at least with a goose—which was to cross the sticks in front of his neck and drive him into the V so caused. I do not know if the goose's well-known V flying formation had anything to do with it, but it worked. The winner, I remember, was much admired as, having got hold of some samples of German aniline dyes, I coloured the bird all the colours the samples supplied. I always wondered how the flock received him on his return.

An old friend of mine used to say that any race was as good to see as the Derby, if it was well contested, and there is some truth in that. From the view of the majority who see it and the distance at which they are, the horse might be the very worst instead of the best, and no one can be any the wiser.

I wonder what my friend would have said about a menagerie race.

Thinking of curious races reminds me of one I saw in Ireland which, for sheer brutality alone, was remarkable.

So far as I can remember it took place at a show of some kind near Waterford. It was for donkeys, to be driven in the well-known ass-carts then in use. Each driver had a good stout stick, and was accompanied by a party of friends on foot, his backers I suppose, similarly armed. At the fall of the flag, every man of them belaboured the unfortunate ass, and continued to do so the whole length of the course, about two hundred yards. I hope I shall never see such a thing again.

I have only once seen a regular race-meeting in Ireland, and there was little difference between it and any small meeting elsewhere, but one side issue was rather remarkable. A railway embankment bordered the course on the side farthest from the paddock enclosure, and I noticed a considerable crowd on one



Hunting Scene by Joseph Crawhall

Irish Humour

part of this and every member of the crowd was dressed in black. Inquiring who they were, an Irish friend I was with replied, "Oh, that's only the priests. The bishop has forbidden them to go on any racecourses in the neighbourhood. If you watch you'll see their commissioner come across with their money." Sure enough before each race a ragged individual did come over to the bookmakers' ring to make their investments. I wondered what the bishop would think.

I have encountered in Ireland more incidents that seem to me to be funny than in any other place I have been, and in nearly every case the actors seem totally unaware of the humour.

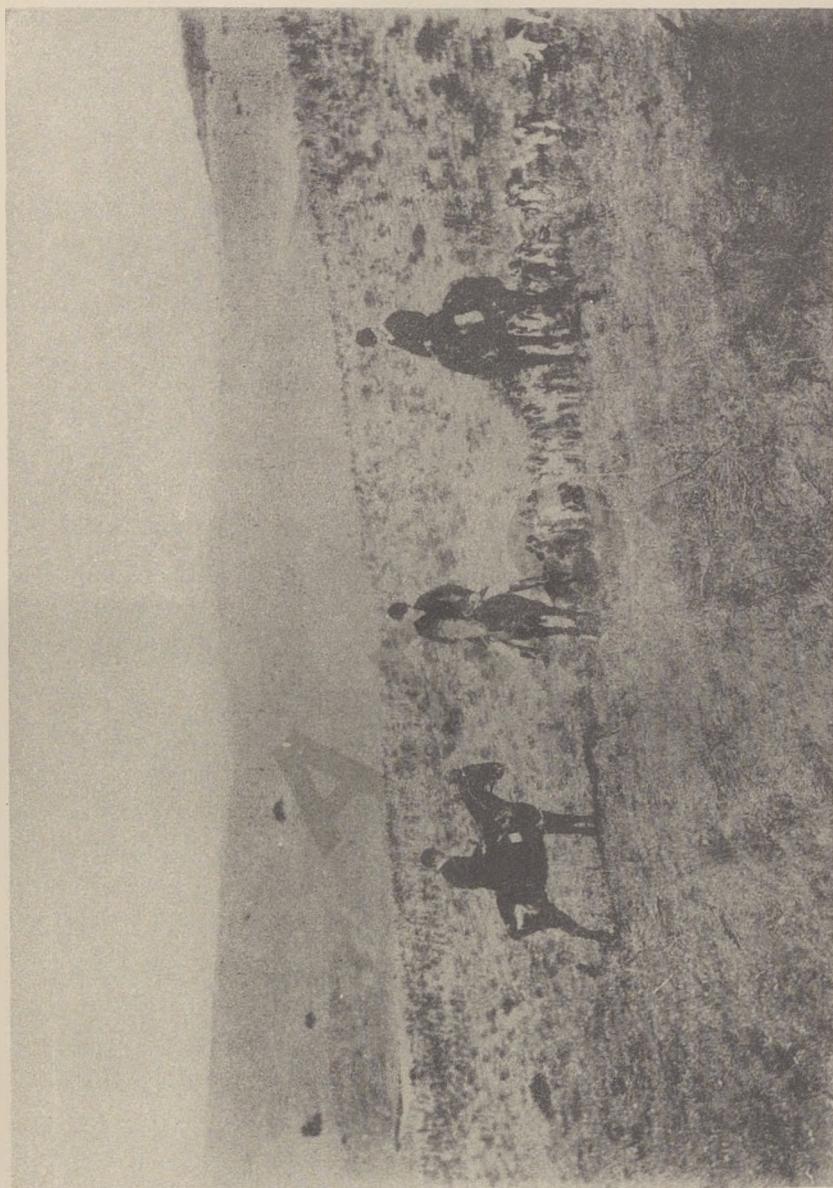
A friend lately told me of having seen an amusing incident, at a funeral of all places. It was the funeral of a very old woman, mother of a widely-known horse-dealer, so the crowd was a large one, even for an Irish funeral. In the struggle to get a good place at the graveside, a young lad had the misfortune to get shoved into the excavation. He was promptly hauled out by the scruff of the neck by the chief mourner, the said horse-dealer, with the objurgation: "Come out av me mother's grave, ye bloody young reptile!" I was just recently told, by another Irishman, a story that is worthy of becoming a classic. An old woman just returned from a pilgrimage to Lourdes was passing the Customs at an Irish port. She declared nothing, but the Customs officer, noticing a bottle she carried under her cloak, asked: "Phwat would that be ye have in the bottle?" and got the reply, "Ach, 'tis holy wather." Customs officer, removing the cork, "It smells uncommon like John Jameson." Old woman: "Holy Mother! another miracle!"

To go back to Morocco, hunting scent was not bad except in an east wind, and then only on the windward side of the hills. I have

Keeping Hounds in Morocco

no record of the number of kills, but should say that it was as good as any small hunts here, considering the wild, unstoppable country. Twelve couple generally made up the pack, about half being Welsh, or Welsh crossbred, broken-haired hounds. We bred some, too, using a stallion, a Welsh hound, "Statesman," one of the best hounds of which I have ever had personal knowledge. Never tired, he, if not watched, would slip off on the way home, and do a bit more hunting on his own.

As well as hunting season, I was there part of one summer and the whole of another. The first summer, hounds were sent to the country to a Spanish farm, but did not do well; some got snake-bitten and died. The second summer, Crawhall, Bevan (the Master who followed Frias) and I, decided to keep the hounds in the old kennel, and used to take them sea-bathing each day. What a treat that was! They delighted in it, and once in sight of the sea, nothing could hold them. On one of these occasions I had lent Bevan a little horse I had called "Bootles' Baby," which had a trick of bucking occasionally, though not very seriously. Bevan had ridden into the sea beyond hounds, why I do not know. He, I should explain, was long-legged, and the horse small, and was holding up his legs as high as possible to keep his feet out of the water when a wave, bigger than the rest, took Bootles under the tail. The immediate result was a couple of bucks, and the disappearance overhead of his rider. I, of course, galloped after the loose horse up the beach, and nearly completed the comedy by falling off through laughing. The photograph, on page 109, shows Bevan on Bootles, which I gave to the hunt when I left, and Crawhall on Dan Dancer, also a characteristic bit of the best of our country.



The Tangier Hounds

“The Stolen Goose Club”

There was a little dining-club started in Tangier, the origin of which is, I think, curious enough to be worth relating. Walter Rottenburg, the German good samaritan, who had done so much for me at Rabat, had moved his quarters to Tangier after completing the fort he had built for the Sultan at Rabat, and was living with his wife and family on the Marshan outside the town. I was living in a cottage in his garden which he had put at my disposal. Going to dine in the town one evening, I told my servant to bring a donkey down for me to ride home. This, I hasten to explain, was not that I expected such transport to be necessary, but that it was the nearest local equivalent to the modern taxi available, and in universal use then by both sexes when dining out or attending any festivity. The ass duly arrived, but, to my astonishment, I found it loaded with a brace of live geese suspended by the legs. Their presence, as explained by my lad, was, that on the way down, he heard the cries of geese, evidently carried by some one, and, suspecting robbery from Rottenburg, who had some, he cried to the thief to stop. Thereupon that individual dropped the birds and fled. Stolen they evidently were, but not, it turned out, from Rottenburg. They were not claimed, so I bought them, and Crawhall and I gave a dinner to a few friends, at which they occupied the place of honour on the table. This dinner proved such a success that on the spot it was decided to form “The Stolen Goose Club,” electing Rottenburg as president.

The club was governed by only one rule. It was that two members, in turn, should entertain the rest, the *pièce de résistance* of the meal being two geese, which had to be *stolen* by the said hosts. The dinners were fixed at fortnightly intervals, and so far as I remember four or five took place. I cannot

“Bibi” Carlton

vouch that they all complied with *the rule*, but the second of them certainly did, though I regret to say the requisite geese were stolen from the president’s poultry-yard, in spite of the fact that when he heard the disturbance there, he fired the contents of a ten-shot repeating scatter gun (German) into the air —along with some quite low German.

Thinking of that club reminds me that I had almost forgotten a notable member of it, “Bibi” Carlton, who appeared and disappeared, as the exigencies of a wandering life allowed, in and out of our little community. Always cheerful and always welcome, I recall his arrival from up country one night after the geese had gone, and when offered some dinner refusing, on the plea of not feeling very well, then cutting an orange in half and spreading each part lavishly with mustard and eating them. Perhaps it was a Moorish cure for something; some of the more civilized medicines are not very nice, but I think this one must just about hold the record.

In *Mirages*, a book by the late Cunningham Graham, I have just read an article devoted to our old friend, who will be remembered by any of the small community of sportsmen who used to meet in old days at Tangier, and who still survive. He was notable in many ways and unique in his own. Without him Tangier would not have been what it was. The article, brilliantly written, as might be expected, was entitled, “Bibi,” a name by which its owner was known from one end of Morocco to the other. Originally a term of affection, given by the Moors, among whom his childhood was passed, it stuck to him ever after, and, I believe that a letter addressed to “Bibi, Morocco,” would have found him without the honourable surname to which he was also entitled. I have not access to

“Bibi” Carlton

official records, but I always understood that his father had been British Minister to Morocco, though Cunningham Graham makes no mention of this. Be that as it may, by some chance he was brought up—or perhaps I should say grew up—as much Moor as Englishman, speaking their language and dialects as perfectly, or more so, than they did themselves, as well as the Spanish of the Jews of Tangier. Continual and wide travel in Morocco, added to quick intellect, had given him a knowledge and understanding of both these people as probably no one else has ever had. Bohemian, gipsy, or whatever would describe him, he had a charm which was his own, and is indescribable. A lady writer, who visited Tangier in the eighties, was so struck with his picturesque personality that she wrote a novel in which he figured as the hero. I regret to say I never read it, but it was the subject of a good deal of chaff in which Bibi was the quite unconcerned victim.

Always poor and open-handed, if one of us, his friends, had lacked a coat Bibi would have given him his own, but—and this is where he differed from other generous people—if he had not got one, but knew some one else who had, I believe he would not have hesitated to take that and give it, irrespective of the wishes of its legitimate owner. He was a law unto himself; a thing more possible at that time in Morocco than in probably almost any other place so near civilization. He picked up a living somehow; a little trading—not always according to the rules supposed to guide the Customs' officials—and doing dragoman and interpreter to parties going to the interior, and in running camps, transport, rations, and everything connected with such expeditions, no one could touch him. Absolutely fearless, and known to every native as being

“Bibi” Carlton

so, under his charge they could go anywhere in the full assurance of being brought through safely.

On the occasion when Raisouli, described then as a “bandit chief,” captured and held for ransom Kaid Maclean, ex-British officer, and head of the Sultan’s army (such as it was), there was a difficulty in finding some one to take the ransom to the Kaid, until the matter was put in the able hands of Bibi, who, of course, carried it out to the satisfaction of all, including, I dare say, himself and Raisouli.

No one in a pig-sticking camp could compare with Bibi. Happy-go-lucky, cheerful and full of fun, he could always get information of where to go to find pig, and no one would ride after them harder than he would, probably on some kind of outlaw of a horse equipped with much over-ripe tackle. I remember an amusing illustration of this latter point when he took an end-over-end toss, in which practically every item of his harness broke, leaving Bibi with only a handful of broken reins. Nothing daunted, however, things were patched up somehow, with the aid of palmetto rope and string, and he continued the chase. On another occasion, in an amateur bull-fight, held near Tangier, Bibi proved himself by far the most expert of the party and really, I think, would not have disgraced any fight of *novillos*, even in Spain.

I do not know if such posts still exist in Morocco, but at the time I knew it, at each minor town on the coast there was a vice-consul, representing each of the most important countries. They were not paid, but by a treaty with the Sultan as “trading consuls,” they were granted freedom from Customs duty, which was something like ten per cent *ad valorem* on most articles

“Bibi” Carlton

imported or exported, including grain. It was no doubt a well-meant scheme by which their various nationals were provided with some one to protect them from the rather unscrupulous native rulers, but it certainly did not encourage trade much, to give one man a practical monopoly, or at least a ten per cent advantage over all others.

Bibi, when we last saw him, had acquired one of these appointments, at Alcazar, and I have no doubt he was capable of making full use of its advantages, but I cannot picture the romantic figure around whom a young lady novelist wrote tales, and of whom all his friends knew many adventurous realities, settling down to wax fat in prosaic prosperity. I have often thought I should like to see him again, but no, better not, perhaps; we should both be disappointed and we could not fight old battles over again. He was never one to look back, always forward; action not words was his motto. I can only think of Bibi as young, spare, and athletic, “fresh as a quail,” to use his favourite expression describing his state of being at the moment. I prefer to think of him as the most vital personality in my experience, one who could never grow old—a mirage no doubt—but as R. B. Cunningham Graham, writing of that chimera in the book referred to, concludes:

“At any cost preserve your mirage intact and beautiful. If riding in the desert you behold it slowly taking shape, turn and sit sideways in your saddle, pouring a libation of tobacco smoke towards Mecca and muttering a prayer.”

Once at Tangier—I cannot now put a date to it, but it was in the eighties or early nineties—we saw some fighting between the Riff tribe, whose land came down almost to Tangier,

Moorish Soldiers

extending round the bay and back into the hills beyond, and the Sultan's askari. I think the trouble arose over failure to pay some tribute said to be due to the Sultan, and some Moorish troops were sent down to punish the delinquents. So far as we could see, the result ended in a draw, and whether the debt was collected or not I cannot say. The tribesmen seemed to have rather the best of it to all appearance, always repulsing the attacks of the Sultan's men, but the fighting was of such an antiquated kind that it was difficult to judge. The Riffs defended their hills, and a few on each side were killed, as we saw their heads brought in in triumph by the returning warriors, but to whom the heads had belonged was exceedingly doubtful. The Sultan, in a good old-fashioned way, had offered seven pesetas for each head sent to him at Fez, and we strongly suspected that friend's heads, after they had done with them, would be of the same value as those of the enemy, and used accordingly. The Sultan's so-called soldiers were in life almost undistinguishable from the tribesmen, no particular uniform marking the difference except a somewhat different shaped fez on their heads, and this was not universally worn.

Most of these soldiers were horsemen, and though the enemy were practically invisible in the scrub on the hills, these cavalry attacked on horseback. The method was to gallop into where the Riffs were shooting, fire their guns as in powder-play, wheel and gallop back again. Most were armed with the usual old flint-lock gas-pipe type of gun, only a very occasional one having a rifle of more modern pattern; so shooting, especially from the back of a galloping horse, could hardly be very accurate. We watched several days of this, through field-glasses, and saw an occasional man fall, but we hardly saw any of the

Moorish Soldiers

defenders, though the smoke of their black powder showed where they were.

A good many villages were burned, which I supposed counted to the Sultan.

Tangier and district became rather dangerous about the time the askari were in the neighbourhood, owing to the fact that they were almost compelled to rob to live. Their pay, of one penny per day, might be enough to exist on up country, but was wholly inadequate in Tangier or its neighbourhood. While the prickly pear was everywhere, that and some bread sufficed, but its season came to an end. Several Europeans were attacked and robbed. I lost a tent, which I had pitched outside as a bath-room—a rare find for the thief, as no doubt there was a ready market for a thing of the kind.

I cannot say I lost anything beyond the tent, but one had to be careful, and I generally put a revolver in my pocket when out at night.

I was living about half a mile outside the town then at the Marshan, and one night had an uncomfortable experience. I had dined in town and walking home late had just had the town gate opened to let me out. I noticed that some one slipped out behind me and was following. I walked on up the track until it went through a thicket of aloe and prickly pear away from any houses. Then I thought I should just see if my shadower was still there, so I stepped aside into the dark and waited, without result. He had evidently branched into another path, and no doubt was a perfectly harmless native who possibly had wanted my company; but it is uncomfortable to feel some one at your back at a time like that.

An incident which might have been alarming, but for the fact

An Unpleasant Experience

that I was in complete ignorance of facts until next day, happened on another late return. I lived then in a garden just above the Grand Soko or market-place, and instead of waking up the guard at the gate, I used to go along a little alley and jump over the low wall bounding it, just by my stable. This I did on the night in question, passing the stable and a big packing-case from which a piano had recently been unpacked, and so to bed. No excitement in that, but a very horrible murder had been committed that day, in which one member of a band of Spanish musicians had killed another, and it was traced that the murderer passed the night in that packing-case, and in fact left there the knife with which he had stabbed the other. I admit it gave me a thrill to know that he was probably there when I passed within a yard of the case. He escaped, as was usual with criminals in Morocco then.



Fox and Hare, by Joseph Crawhall

CHAPTER VI

Spain, London Again & Hertfordshire with Crawhall

I HAVE said that Tangier was then a refuge for a good many undesirable people, and from geographical reasons the majority came from Spain. Some of those, when carrying a full load of *agua ardiente*, were about as unpleasant company as could be found anywhere. One day in the Soko I saw an incident which had something of David and Goliath in it. Above the market there were some very rough Spanish drinking-places, and as I was riding across the open space that formed the great market, a mad-drunk Spaniard emerged from one of these booths. For all the world he looked exactly like the bull does, when out of his dark cell he emerges into the glaring sunlight of the ring—head up, looking for something to attack, and going headlong for the first thing he sees move. The man had a knife in his hand and had fairly run amok. The market was empty, except that, standing near me was a young country Moor—a boy of about seventeen, I should say—a beautiful figure, like a Greek statue, his head clean shaved, an old jelab covering his body, with bare legs and feet. In his hand he had a stick of about three feet long, the lower end of which was a ball, twice the size of a cricket ball, cut out of the root from which it had grown. The mad Spaniard saw, and made straight at him, knife in hand. The lad never moved perceptibly, but

Crossing to Spain

waited until the charging man came just within reach, then, without the slightest warning, dropped him in his tracks with a tap on the head from the knobbed stick, as if it was the most ordinary thing to do. The friends who had been in pursuit behind the drunkard, picked him up and bore him away, still quite limp and unconscious. I have never seen such a neat knockout. I should explain, the fact that I was on a horse was the reason which enabled me to see this performance from a front seat; on foot, I do not think I should have remained for the last act.

Five of us made a rather memorable expedition to the annual fair at Algeciras, our chief purpose being to see a bull-fight. Starting the day before, we got to Gibraltar in about four hours, and soon found a boat starting across the bay. What a boat it was, too! She had a very long and interesting history, and used, occasionally, to cross the straits to Tangier, but at the time we first made her acquaintance she was in such a state of dilapidation that even crossing Gibraltar Bay was a matter of some difficulty. An old paddle-steamer, little bigger than a tug, she had lost something like half the floats of one paddle wheel, but, by steering hard against the good one, she managed to lay a course more or less in the direction desired. She was loaded to full capacity with people making for the fair, and about halfway over we were all asked to come over to the effective side in order to give that paddle a better chance. But at length we arrived.

I heard later, it was decided that at last the old boat must be sent to England for overhaul, but the difficulty was to find any one willing to risk crossing the Bay of Biscay in her. At last a young ship's officer down on his luck was found, and a similarly



Spanish Gipsy and Donkey
Note the man's curious three-legged wooden shoes

My First Bull-fight

reckless crew. About half-way across the Bay they fell in with a liner which had a broken propeller shaft, towed her into port, and earned a large sum in salvage money. I should say they deserved every penny of it.

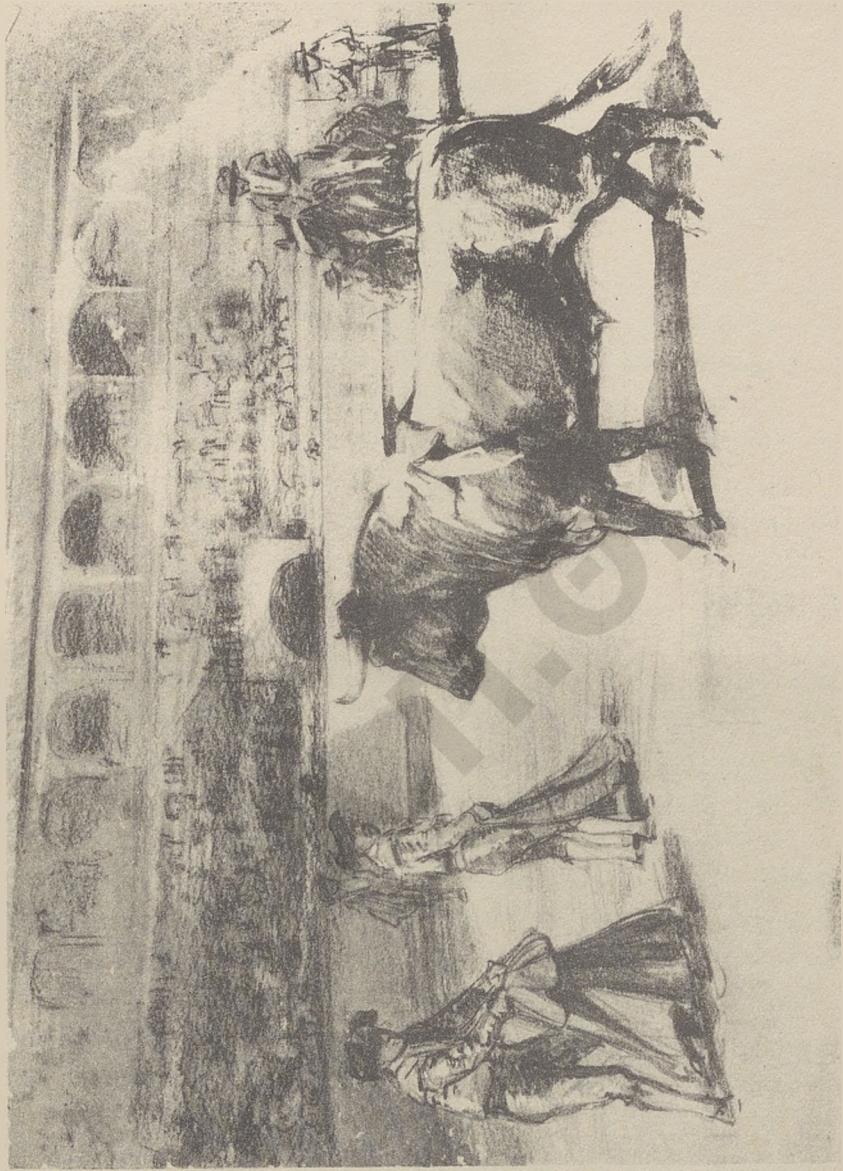
Our first care was to find somewhere to sleep. There was then no *Regina Christina Hotel* as now, the only hostellries being a couple of little Spanish inns. We were lucky to find two available rooms to accommodate the five of us. There was only one real bed, but some curious and wonderful substitutes were rigged up; one in particular I recall for the trick that it played on Joe Crawhall, its occupant. This bed consisted of two cross-pieces of wood, at each end connected by poles, across which was stretched a piece of ancient sacking; this allowed of its being folded up when not in use. C. had just finished a last cigarette, and saying, "I'm going to sleep. Good night," turned over to do so, when the sacking split from end to end, and deposited him on the floor, greatly to the delight of the rest of us. Everything has a saving grace, however, and that of this temporary bed furniture was that it did not harbour that insect only too well known in Southern Spain. So we slept peacefully.

The fair had started, though the next day, on which the big bull-fight was due, was the chief one. All kinds of country people were to be seen; herds of pigs with very picturesque herdsmen; and all the usual features of such events. Every one, of course, was full of the *Corrida de toros*, and we heard that the bulls were just outside the town, and that we could see them being brought in about midnight, if we cared to. Certainly we did, so after an evening meal of sorts, washed down with the inevitable sherry, we sallied out. Police were in charge and

My First Bull-fight

kept every one some way back from the actual road, all lights had been extinguished, but were unwanted as it was a fine moonlit night. After a wait of about an hour, we heard the distant sound of cattle bells, and, over a slight rise, we saw the bulls come at a gallop. They were mixed with some oxen, each of which had tied to his neck one of the bells which we heard. Ahead, behind and on the wings were mounted horsemen, armed with enormously long lances, and with the usual blanket across the saddle bow. The gallop past only lasted a few seconds, and horses, men and cattle all vanished into the Plaza de Toros. I should have liked to see what took place inside, but that was impossible. I believe each bull was run into his cell to be left until the time for his issue to the ring.

The whole proceedings of the bull-ring have been so often described that I shall only say that it struck me as one of the most stirring spectacles I have ever seen, despite the horror that the horse part makes one feel. Killing the bull is not open to the same charges that many blood-sports undoubtedly incur, as the bull is a fighting animal and does not know that death is at the end. He is simply fighting, which is his nature, and getting a good deal of satisfaction from it; he dies, usually quickly, by a skilfully delivered thrust from the *espada*. I should say it was an infinitely better end than the slaughterhouse. He has had, for about five years, the best life of any animal in Spain, and, if he passes some comparatively harmless tests of courage, ends it in about a quarter of an hour's wild excitement in the ring, with no premonition of the end. As regards the men, I dare say they are quite callous; but so, I expect, are those whose occupation is killing animals for our food here, and none but vegetarians take exception to that. In addition, the



Play with the Capa

A "Corrida" in Morocco

matador takes risks which require courage of an exceptional order.

Crawhall afterwards painted a very fine picture of a *picador* and bull, and I did a water-colour drawing of the team of mules dragging out the dead bull, which Sir George Reid, then President of the Royal Scottish Academy, did me the honour of buying.

Bull-fighting is inbred in the Spaniard, and all kinds of lesser fights take place in the season all over Spain. At the one referred to the best *matadors* in Spain appear, also the very best bulls, so it is typical of the sport at its best.

Sometime after our Algeciras experience, we were invited to a very rustic variety of *corrida* by a Spaniard resident in Morocco. About seventeen miles from Tangier there was a farm, the manager of which was our host on that occasion. At this farm there was a very large yard, surrounded by buildings, into which all the cattle were gathered at night as a precaution against robbery. On the occasion in question, the manager had gathered all the stock likely to show fight into one of these buildings, and these were let out, one at a time, into the centre yard. All went for the closed exit gate, followed by a few of the guests, some carrying a cape of a kind, others, only a jacket. The young bulls, even yearlings, on being surrounded, nearly all showed fight, and bravely charged the amateur bull-fighters. After a few minutes the animal was let out and another came in; the older bulls naturally putting up the best fight. Curiously enough, the best of all was a bullock which started by clearing the spectators, including myself, off a rail fence on which we were sitting near the door of entrance, our legs hanging inside. There was only one accident, in which one of our *chulos* had his

The “Corrida Patriotica”

hand gored through falling and scrambling behind a rubbing-post in the yard, against which the bull pinned it. There was, of course, no killing, and it really was a very amusing afternoon. The broaching of a small cask of sherry helped, no doubt, to cheer up the proceedings, although there was no abuse of this hospitality. John Jorrocks, of immortal memory, said, “‘Untin’ and drinkin’ is two men’s work”; if this is true of ‘untin’, it certainly is so of bull-fighting, and I believe this rule is strictly adhered to by those whose profession it is, with exception of the *picadors* perhaps.

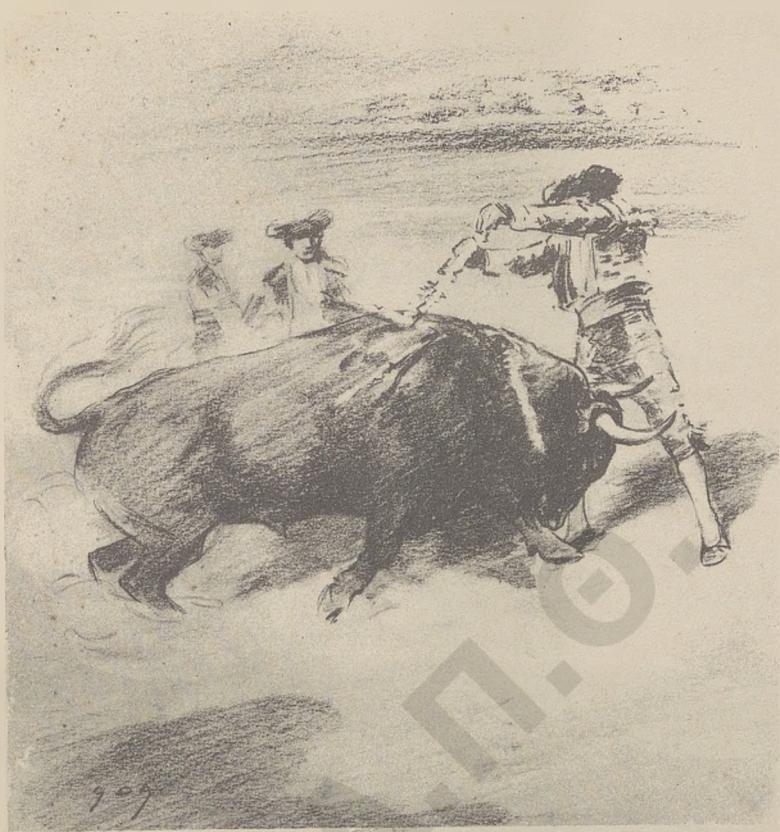
I was in Spain again immediately after the beginning of the Philippine War, and our experience then was anything but pleasant. My wife and I, on our wedding tour, seemed to be regarded as little better than the American enemy. One hotel refused to have us as guests, and people in the street turned to watch us out of sight. Matters got worse when war news came through, though the Spanish reports were so much censored and edited that they were quite unreliable.

We were at the Escorial when it was billed over the town that, in aid of the hospital units at the front, there would be held that afternoon a *Corrida Patriotica*, in other words, a patriotic bull-fight. The Plaza, where it was held, was built of rough uncemented stone, and everything was exceedingly crude. The bulls were bad and the performers not much better (fortunately there were no horses); a bitterly cold wind was blowing, and altogether it was a frost. I always remember a little man, one of whose *banderillas* broke when he was placing it in the bull’s shoulder. I do not know if such a thing is regarded as unlucky, but he wheeled round, and, throwing the pieces behind him, ran for dear life to the

MULES DRAGGING OUT THE DEAD BULL AT A BULL-FIGHT

(Sketch for a picture by G. D. Armour)





Planting the Banderillas

Spanish Etiquette

barrier, terror in his face and action, and the bull in full pursuit behind.

The Spaniard always strikes me as a dignified, well-mannered person, whatever class he belongs to. In the North one never passed any one on the road without his saying "Go with God," but when I was travelling with my wife by rail, we had a curious illustration of their conception of what did constitute good manners. It was a very hot day, and we were in an old first-class carriage, without corridor or any modern conveniences. At a junction three bull-fighters stepped into the carriage. One, I afterwards found out to be the leading *matador* in Spain at that time, called Minuto from his small stature; I saw him performing in Madrid later. All wore the characteristic dress of their trade when not performing: it consists of a short black jacket, open soft shirt fastened with valuable studs, black trousers, so tight round the middle that one wondered how they got into them, and a flat-brimmed, black hat, underneath which was the inevitable pigtail, to which a black horse-hair rosette is fastened when in the ring. They had with them a bundle of the red and yellow cloaks used in the ring, stained in places with blood. These were taken down and used to play cards upon, which they did, apparently for high stakes, most of the afternoon. Smoking and spitting seem to be inseparable in Spain, and this our friends did without cessation. At a stoppage my wife, rather tired of this, went next door and sat with a French couple she had met at our hotel. Minuto, when the train again started, anxiously asked if the *señora* had been left behind, and when I reassured him, said, with great relief, "Ah, then we may take our coats off!" Spitting, evidently, did not matter, but coats were *de rigueur* whatever the climate.

A Case of "Occupational Adjustment"

During that particular visit to Spain, at Cordoba, we made an expedition into the country to see a big *hacienda* or ranch, at which the fighting bulls were bred. I forget its name, but it was one of the largest and best known. That its extent was considerable was indicated by the fact that we saw seventy bulls for issue that season. These roamed over a great tract of country covered with all kinds of vegetation, mostly then in flower, and very beautiful as it was spring. We had driven to the ranch in a hired carriage and sat in this behind a good wire fence while some herdsmen, on foot, brought the great herd up to the other side of it. They used slings to throw stones to direct the bulls, never going within about a hundred yards of them. Mixed with these bulls were the bell oxen, used in herding them to their doom in the ring.

A good-looking old fellow, who had survived the rough life of a *picador*, was the manager, and, in spite of the nature of his charge, he had pastoral life written all over him. The *picadors* are recruited from herdsmen and generally return to that occupation, if they survive the bull-ring and the free drinks long enough. That mysterious something that makes a man look like his occupation is very difficult to explain, but it certainly operates, and I once noted a striking case of this in Tangier. The man, a Spaniard, was ostler in a stable from which I used to hire horses when I first knew him; then he was the real horsy dago—black mutton-chop whiskers, list shoes and a short jacket, all complete; he could have been nothing other than a stableman. I knew him for several years, but after a break of two, when I went to the stable, he was no longer there. Some days after, when riding outside the town among some scattered native houses and gardens fenced by the usual prickly pear,



The Picador

I Return to London

I met a flock of goats. They were preceded by an old man with a long beard, very raggedly clad, busily cutting the leaves of the prickly pear in pieces with a knife and feeding it to the goats following him. It was a peaceful, pastoral scene. As I came near, something familiar about the man made me look at him more closely. I suppose he felt this, and looking up from his cutting, a dreamy far-away kind of smile slowly came over his face; recognition was gradually dawning on him. Then he got it and pulled the front of a ragged old hat. Something of the same was taking place in me, and at last I recognized my old stableman gone pastoral. The sharp, horsy look had been succeeded by a placid, bovine expression: there was no longer any occasion to hurry; it was not necessary to shave, hardly to wash. A beard grew; clothes wore out; but in that climate they were hardly necessary, so why trouble about them? It was a complete metamorphosis, all in two years.

Another thing in Spain always used to strike me. Why did bull-fighters look like lawyers? I do not know, but they certainly did. According to my theory there should be a traceable affinity: possibly dodging the law, or helping others to do it, has something in common with evading the bull.

For two years after this I was in London and had a studio near Primrose Hill. It was a great improvement on anything I had had before, and was really a very comfortable way of living for a man alone.

There were twelve studios round a court, some of which were occupied by people of note. J. W. Waterhouse, R.A., was one, Maurice Greiffenhagen another, and others of us of

Maurice Greiffenhagen

less importance. It was a very happy little colony, and we had great fun outside our work. Waterhouse's studio was a never-failing place of meeting, and he and his wife the best of hosts. Greiffenhagen was, when in the humour, a wonderful pianist. He played the piano by instinct—there is no other word for it. I have gone with him to some kind of light opera and seen him, on our return, though almost unable to read music, sit down and give a vivid impression of what we had heard, orchestration and all. At that time he was, to my mind, the leading illustrator in London in spite of the fact that he hated the work, feeling, no doubt, that he should have been painting. The art mastership in Glasgow, which he got some time afterwards, freed him to a certain extent, and, as all know, he justified his belief in himself by becoming, perhaps, the best portrait-painter in England of his time. He was always liable to be influenced by some movement or other, sometimes almost to the extent of imitation, but sound technical ability and real artistic feeling generally enabled him to extract the good and leave the bad. He was fond of fun, and, like dear old quiet Waterhouse, took his part in all the nonsense we amused ourselves with at Primrose Hill. I remember some *tableaux vivants* in which we caricatured each other's pictures. Mine, being mostly of animals, were exempt, but I personally did not escape so easily, as, being the only clean-shaven member of the party, I was cast for all the female parts involved. This, to any one who knows my physical characteristics, was joke number one, and a good one. One of the pictures caricatured was Greiffenhagen's well-known "Idyll," now in the Liverpool Art Gallery. As all the world knows it represents a shepherd embracing a very pretty shepherdess among large, red poppies. A Scotsman,



J.W. WINTERHOUSE F.A. MAURICE GREENHAGE

MARYAT LOUDEN & RINGO

A.

A Stud in Hertfordshire

Torrance by name, did the part of the shepherd, I was the "pretty" shepherdess! The poppies were constructed from scarlet tissue paper, something like a sheet for each, so they certainly could not be overlooked.

Another tableau was Waterhouse's picture of Circe, and here again I filled the title role: the result may be imagined! A few outside friends were admitted to these entertainments, among them a son of Charles Dickens, but there were also many purely studio evenings which, though hardly worth record, were amusing to those who took part. Boxing-gloves and foils were requisitioned at times, and though none of us was even reasonably proficient with either, our very ineptitude was a delight to the onlookers. The Scotsman Torrance, already referred to, was our best boxer, but had to be suspended, since he always, unwittingly, hit far too hard.

One of our occasional visitors was Fred Norton, later to become well known as the composer of the music for *Chu Chin Chow* and other successful things; besides being a first-class musician he was very amusing company.

After a couple of years at Primrose Hill studios, I decided to join with Joe Crawhall at a farmhouse in Hertfordshire, and there we stayed for two years. We ran a little joint stud and hunted with the Hertfordshire hounds, and occasionally with old Rawl's staghounds. Our experience of horse-buying in Morocco still influenced our ideas of price, and we really had some wonderful bargains. We imported from Tangier a little Barb stallion, which Crawhall had left there when he came home. Mesmuda, he was called, from the name of the place he came from. He was unusually small for a Barb, being only slightly over 13.2 hands high, but was all quality and a wonderful

Crawhall as Jockey

little horse. The fact that he could gallop tempted us to race him, and there being no regularized pony racing, "flapper meetings" were the only substitute, so a-flapping we went. I think it was one of the most amusing things I have ever done. Crawhall rode, so as far as we were concerned everything was straight, but we were certainly an exception to the rule, and, being so, were a great problem to the other competitors. Mesmuda ran five times, and on each occasion was placed second; second money just about paid our expenses, so it was cheap entertainment, if not glory. On one occasion—at Leighton Buzzard, it was—we arrived at the course early, and saw an example of the methods of the "flapping" sportsmen. It had evidently been arranged what should win the race for which we had entered, and our arrival with this good-looking pony caused quite a flutter in the dove-cot, if the gang there could, by any stretch of the imagination, be likened to doves. We were approached to find out if we would fall in with the arrangements already made, and since we were, of course, not responsive, it looked as if we might upset a coup. However, since there was just time, they wired for another pony considered a certainty, from London. He arrived and did the trick so we again had to put up with second place.

On another occasion Mesmuda got so close to the winner that his backers thought he had won. An excited group asked Crawhall, as he rode in, if it was so, and when told, "No, beaten by a short head," one said, "Well, that's nigh enough to wrangle over, ain't it?"

From what experience I have had since, I should not put down Hertfordshire, at least where we lived, as very good hunting country, from a riding point of view. It was all big



G. D. Armour and Infant Son. From a drawing by the late Maurice Greiffenbagen, R.A.

Buying at Tattersalls

woods and deep plough which carried little scent but when almost unrideable from wet, and there were few fences in the part we knew that a donkey could not have surmounted, but we enjoyed it. They had a good Master, Mr. Edward R. Sworder, and a good huntsman, called Wells. We got much amusement out of a certain hunting correspondent who wrote under the name of "The Dragon." He had all the appearance of a retired huntsman or something as professional, although he never jumped a fence. If at a loss for copy, he wrote about anything, sometimes as remote from hunting as the breakfast he had had, or the dinner he hoped to get on his return home, but it was so spiritedly told that he generally got away with it.

On going to Hertfordshire, I bought the first horse I ever got at Tattersalls, and, I think, the cheapest of many which followed after. We had, of course, no experience of Albert Gate, and did not at first know the pitfalls to avoid. The mare in question, which came first in the catalogue, lacked a warranty, and was, in consequence, knocked down to me for ten guineas. She was a wonderful little blood mare of polo pony type, and sound as a bell, so luck had looked after the innocent. Crawhall



"At Tattersalls"

Some Horse Bargains

hunted her, and I sold her at the end of the season to a well-known polo player for, as may be imagined, a good deal more than I gave; I heard afterwards that she had not made good at polo, being "too hot," but she took a third prize at Ranelagh Show.

When riding her with hounds one day I got the greatest fright I can remember in all my experience. Something prompted me to jump some low rails into a small plantation. This the mare, fortunately, did at a trot, as I found I was on the very edge of a small stone quarry, so near that I dare not even turn her round, but slipped off myself leaving her to do what she liked. She managed to turn successfully, and when she jumped back over the rails I drew a long breath.

My father was nearly killed in Renfrewshire through inadvertently jumping into a quarry which was hidden behind a stone wall. In his case the horse actually did jump down without falling, and to every one's amazement galloped out the other side.

Another bargain was an aged horse that had a hip down through some accident, a guinea more bought him. He had peculiarities, but, as the Jew dealer said to the complaining purchaser of a moth-eaten, five-shilling coat, "What do you expect for five bob. Humming birds?" He would not submit to being tied up, therefore he could not travel in a railway horse-box and had to be ridden home. He was a hard puller, but a great hunter who would face anything in the way of a fence, and one day when he jumped through the blackest bullfinch I ever tried, I had hounds to myself for a considerable time. When in Hertfordshire I bought, at Leicester, a race-horse that had won several hurdle races, Hackenden by name.

Some Horse Bargains

He traced back to some of the best blood in the book, including Beeswing, and made a good hunter after giving me some rough rides. He, however, proved to be a rig, and turning him out along with some shire mares upset his temper so much that I



One of Crawhall's Rough Sketches

sent him up to Albert Gate. His speciality was kicking very high for the first five minutes after being mounted, and that I did not spend most of my time remounting was due to the fact that he did not lower his head when doing it, thus enabling me to do many a backward crawl into the saddle. It would be wearisome to recount all our horses, of which there were several more, so I shall whip off.

I have already referred to Crawhall as a great artist; I think

Joseph Crawhall's Pictures

he was the best animal painter of his time, and he did some of his finest work during the time we lived together. His work is well known to a limited number of artists, dealers and buyers, but little to the general public. This is owing, no doubt, to the fact that he produced very few pictures, and these were generally bought and went into private collections at once and so are seldom exhibited. If commercial value is indicative, they should be good, as quite recently a water-colour drawing of a wild duck by him, brought, at auction in London, eleven hundred and fifty pounds. I saw that painted, and many others besides. If he did not paint many of what may be called "serious pictures," he was abundantly prolific of little humorous sketches, some of which I reproduce in this book. Few people or incidents which came under his notice escaped him, but, unfortunately, he valued these things not at all, with the result that they got into all kinds of hands, and most of them have probably perished or at least are lost. Crawhall was a very quiet man but, when he liked, a wit. I remember one morning we met the Cockney son of our farmer landlord. The boy told C. that he had shut up two ducks the night before, and found three eggs in the morning, and asked if he could explain it. "I suppose one laid the other two to one," was the prompt answer.

Joe Crawhall's father was an amateur artist of a very original kind, drawing in the style of primitive woodcuts, often cutting these himself and using them to illustrate little paper-bound books, in the form of the old chap-books, written by himself. The first of these he wrote, illustrated, cut the blocks, and, I think, made the type himself. Joe's humour doubtless came from his father, as the latter, for about fifteen years, supplied most of the jokes illustrated for *Punch* by Charles Kean, the best

Joseph Crawhall's Pictures

artist that paper ever had since its beginning, and probably the best artist of the kind this country has ever produced. I think Kean was the only one who has ever been able to draw a drunk, or rather *tipsy*, man who was quite inoffensive, one who had partaken of the "wine that maketh glad the heart of man," not the sodden drunkard—a subtle, but more important difference.



CHAPTER VII

With the Beaufort and the U.W.H.

THE little establishment which Joe Crawhall and I shared was broken up, after two years, by my getting married. Joe was my best man, quite a new line of country for him but, like all his work, he did it truly and well. After that event, my mode of life naturally had to change somewhat. My wife was fascinated by the Thames country, so we took a little house at Chertsey, near the river. About three years, however, convinced us that there were better places, where the water-level in a garden pond did not rise and fall according to the height of the river, and where it might be warmer in winter and cooler in summer. While there, my passion for horses broke out again to a small extent, and I bought a rare stamp of old mare, with the intention of hunting with the Garth, which met near. This purchase was not a success, however. For some reason she never would lie down, night or day; and the result was bolster-like filled legs and complete grogginess, so Albert Gate received her, and I received the smallest cheque I ever got for a horse.

Not daunted, I speculated again at Tattersalls, in a young one this time, a four-year-old mare, half-sister to Grudon, the stallion that won the National in a snowstorm in 1901. Bought from the breeder, she was a great bargain—I think I gave seventeen guineas for her—and I hunted her with the Garth, and later with the Old Surrey. With the latter, I one day saw

We Move to the Avon Vale

them draw Esher Common, I need hardly say blank; but it is interesting, and looking at the country there now, almost unbelievable.

I think it was Gus Elen who used to sing a song describing the beauty of the country round his home, the refrain of which ended: "If it wasn't for the 'ouses in between." As regards hunting, that certainly applied to all the country within reach of Chertsey, even then, so we decided to remove to one of more promise. The Avon Vale in Wiltshire, a part of the Duke of Beaufort's Hunt which his father had lent, seemed to have attractions, and a visit to Raven Hill, who lived there then, confirmed that.

We found a suitable house with stabling, a rookery and much that was attractive, so the move was made. The manner of it may be worth a word. Having to allow nearly three days for the horse-drawn furniture-van to make the journey, the happy thought occurred to us, that we might drive down ourselves. I should mention that I had just bought a Russian pony at an auction somewhere near the cattle-market at Islington, also that I had just put the sister of Grudon in harness—I don't say broken her to it; there was some doubt as to that—she did go, however, if only on sufferance, and curiously, always slightly lame, though really as sound as a bell. Our start must have amused the neighbours, previously sufficiently startled, by my acting as my own groom. A somewhat sulky blood mare in the shafts of a polo cart, filled by us and our voluminous luggage, was followed, more or less, by a rough-looking pony, tied to the tailboard by a halter. All went fairly well until the pony got tired or lazy and had to be towed by main force. We had got nearly as far as Woking when the devil's own thunderstorm



The late Duke of Beaufort and the Rev. E. A. Milne, M.F.H.

The late Duke of Beaufort

caught us; we plodded on until a tree near the road was struck, and the mare began to get frightened. I knew what that might lead to, so I stopped at the first public-house in Woking; fortunately it had a stable of a kind, and I never felt more glad to get under a roof. A short time sufficed to make the animals comfortable, and a good supper of cold beef and beer did the same for us. A night's sleep and breakfast entirely restored us to the normal, and the bill—I must not forget the bill! “for supper, bed, breakfast and stabling two horses, 7/6,” sent us on rejoicing and quite convinced that we had been taken for what we probably looked, gipsies.

Approaching Reading, though of a frugal mind, I determined that, if I spent my last shilling, the pony should do the rest of the journey by train, which he did. All went well after this, and we arrived just in time to tackle the furniture when it came.

The Avon Vale part of the business did not work out to expectation, as the Duke of Beaufort had that very year taken the country back to himself for cubbing and spring hunting, greatly to the sorrow of the local inhabitants, who had got wire down and had worked it into a very nice country. This necessitated my taking very long journeys to the Dauntsey Vale, Bushton, and that end of the Badminton country. I sold the little mare, as she was not up to carrying me in that deep country, for about three times what she had cost me, and bought, at the then Swindon Repository, the best hunter I have ever ridden, “The Pink ‘Un,” for the extravagant sum of twenty-three guineas. I rode him for five seasons as near hounds as I dare with the old Duke as Master in the field. We called him “The Pink ‘Un” as he was rather hot. By the “old

The late Duke of Beaufort

Duke" I mean the present Duke's father. He was rather gruff in the field, but one knew that he was concentrating on the business in hand, hunting the fox, of which he was a past master. As was excusable in a man of his figure, he never jumped anything in the shape of a fence, but he had such a knowledge of the country, and of the run of foxes, that with the worst of scent, he could walk a fox to death better than any one I have ever seen. Reference to his figure reminds me of one Sunday when I had gone to the kennels with a friend, the Duke came in, and kindly asked us to come up to the house to tea. As he was walking through the gardens hand in hand with his daughters, then little girls, they suggested going to a peach-house on the way. He objected, saying that the door would be locked, but they replied, "that doesn't matter; let us get in through the window." Unfortunately he refused, as I always regretted not having the chance of seeing His Grace performing this feat.

I had to work hard for my hunting, always hacking both ways, a ten-mile meet being counted reasonably near. I kept a record of what "The Pink Un" did in one season on the road; exclusive of hunting. Doubling the distance to the meet, as a fair average, it came to just under five hundred miles. Alas! that horse's end came through his cleverness. If he did not think his jump was going to carry him far enough, he would kick back at the fence, and in doing this he struck a hard stump, and so damaged a fetlock that the kennels received him, though not before I had tried every means of patching the old fellow up. In six seasons he fell only once, through jumping on to a big slippery stump on a bank, turning a complete somersault over me.



*An Object in Search of Subjects
Myself in Central Park, New York*

Hacking across the Marlborough Downs

A considerable number of these long hacks used to be across a part of the Marlborough Downs, which at that time were unenclosed, except for a few boundary fences. This made hacking more pleasant than it would be nowadays, and it was possible to take a fairly straight course.

I remember these same advantages leading to my undoing on one occasion. I had left hounds at about half-past three, and on approaching the high ground it was quite apparent that a fog was coming down. The first few miles were over open down, the only landmark being the ridge over which my route lay. It got thicker the higher I went, so remembering that a certain wire fence enclosed a small bit of ground along one side of which I had ridden in the morning, I pressed on as fast as I dare, found the wire and felt my way along it by swinging the thong of my crop. Unfortunately the wire terminated at a corner and I had to shape the rest of my course by instinct. For once, instinct proved a complete failure, and I lost all sense of direction. I knew I had to cross the London road, but in what direction it lay I had not the slightest idea, and darkness had now come on as well as fog. Fortunately I was on a second horse, which had done little, so I tried leaving it to her, but she also seemed to be lost, a very rare thing for a horse. All of a sudden we stumbled into a rather deep old cart track such as one finds on these downs. It was natural to surmise that this led somewhere, so we took our way along it, stumbling in and out at times, to finish at an old shed solitary and alone. Well, the other end must lead to a farm, I concluded, and right about was the order; this guess proved right, and, it being clearer in the bottom, I at last recognized a place I knew, miles out of my right way, but on a road, thank heaven! Marlborough Downs

A Curious End to a Hunt

are not very extensive, but I think I must have covered most of them that night, as I did not get home until after nine o'clock, having taken over five and a half hours to do a journey that should have been at most about fourteen miles.

These downs were a favourite place with the old Duke for spring hunting, which the Beaufort can do through April, without doing undue damage, and, I believe, though I have never been there to see, a May fox is always killed. One of these spring hunts, at which I was present, has a curious ending; it was, I think, in April, at any rate on a warm, sunny day. They drew a covert on the edge of the downs at Roundway, not far from Devizes, and a fox went away from the top, heading straight over the downs; there was a tremendous scent, and hounds ran very fast. It was fairly easy to keep in touch with them on the lovely old down turf, a lot of the line being over the famous Beckhampton training gallops; but when they got into rougher country, which included up and down some steep hills, hounds could leave horses, and I can remember, towards the end, jumping off the mare I was riding, and toiling beside her—I was young then—as we climbed a very steep bit to Cherhill Monument, a well-known landmark on Lord Lansdowne's estate, visible from the road to London. Only two local farmers who knew the downs were within sight of the Monument when the fox climbed the steps of it. They had kept round the top, instead of through the bottoms, and they told me the hounds were so blown as not to be able to jump up the first step for a few moments, and when they did, fox and hounds all rolled down the steep side of the hill to the bottom.

I arrived just in time to see the end of that, and the worry-worry at the foot. The point was nearly five miles.



The Curious End to a Hunt

A Spring Hunt with the Beaufort

Another “down” run I saw many years ago over part of the same ground was interesting in showing how much hounds’ noses are responsible for keeping the pack together. We had found a fox in a tiny bit of gorse quite near Beckhampton training stables, and the pack got away absolutely at his brush, all together; I lay stress on this, as when they reached Blacklands Hollow—the fox’s objective, it would have taken about half a mile to cover them, so strung out were they. They are, as is well known, a beautifully level pack, and hunt as well together as any in England, but scent was so good that this was not a hunt, but a hound race, pure and simple. I do not think I ever saw hounds go as fast as they did then. The ground was open downland, nearly all on a slightly down grade, but it kept a fast horse I was riding at just about his best pace, and hounds were well into the wooded hollow before any one got there. I forget, but I think “to ground” was the finish.

Of course these are not historic hunts, but I mention them as having characteristics of their own.

Yet another spring hunt, of a much later date, was enough to prevent one ever expressing any opinion as to scent. Hounds met after a spell of dry weather had made everything parched and dusty; there was a bright blue sky and cuttingly cold wind. Every one you met said—if you did not take the words out of his mouth—“Not much chance of scent to-day.” The present Duke, hunting his bitch pack, found a fox just in a corner of the first covert drawn; he slipped out, without any preliminary tow-row inside, I do not know if the field generally heard the horn, but only the Duke, and about six or eight of us, had the luck to get away close to hounds. They raced for about thirty minutes, with the very slightest hesitation, hardly a check, in



A Ploughing Match

passing a farm, and killed in the open without the rest of the field having caught up. This, though nothing to remark in an ordinary way, falsified every theory I have ever heard of about scent.

I remember another hunt—one of the first I had in the Beaufort country—when hounds made a somewhat similar find, and unnoticed by the field got away with three of us with them. I always remember it, though my part was very inglorious. Hounds were leaving the vale to draw what are called the hangings above Bushton. Two people, a lady and a gentleman, stayed back when all went up the hill, and I, reasoning that any fun going would be there, waited too. Almost at once a fox came away near us and took over the vale followed by hounds, heads up and sterns down, racing. Off went the couple, and I followed, on a very bad horse I had picked up at Aldridge's yard. My pilots were going like smoke and I was toiling behind until I finished in a ditch, quite a usual ending with that particular horse.

I found out on inquiry that the couple I had followed were Jack Martin and his wife, Martin being certainly then the best man

A Story of Assheton Smith

across country in the hunt then, and his wife not far behind him. Fancy following them on a real bad one. I was lucky to be alive.

In my first days with the Beaufort Hounds I used to see a man, a retired farmer, who was I told was nearer ninety than eighty, riding a four-year-old horse. His name escapes my memory, but he told me that he hunted with the famous Assheton Smith—a very old story now. He had some of the characteristics of that great horseman, being, like him, partial to horses that were rather difficult to ride. I am no great horseman like these, but have seen enough to understand to some extent their point of view; the rogue is, as I have said before, only a rather more intelligent animal than others, and, if his rider can establish a working understanding with him, that intelligence will serve both of them. I believe some of the methods of Assheton Smith and my old friend of the Beaufort were pretty drastic. Of the former, a story is told of a horse he was riding refusing to pass the blacksmith's shop, and rubbing his rider's leg against the wall. A. S. was quite equal to the occasion, and told the smith to take the red-hot shoe on which he was working, and, using his longest tongs, to lean out of the window, and rub it well into the jibber's quarters. I should think the result was probably a lasting distaste for stopping there again.

When at Gibraltar years ago, I was told of one of the Larios brothers, who for long hunted the Calpe hounds, curing a jibber by milder methods. The offender was a thoroughbred imported from England for racing. When he stuck up at a particular corner, and refused to go where desired, Larios determined to outstay him, and did so after a long day, during which he sent for some lunch, tobacco, sandwiches and a drink, sitting

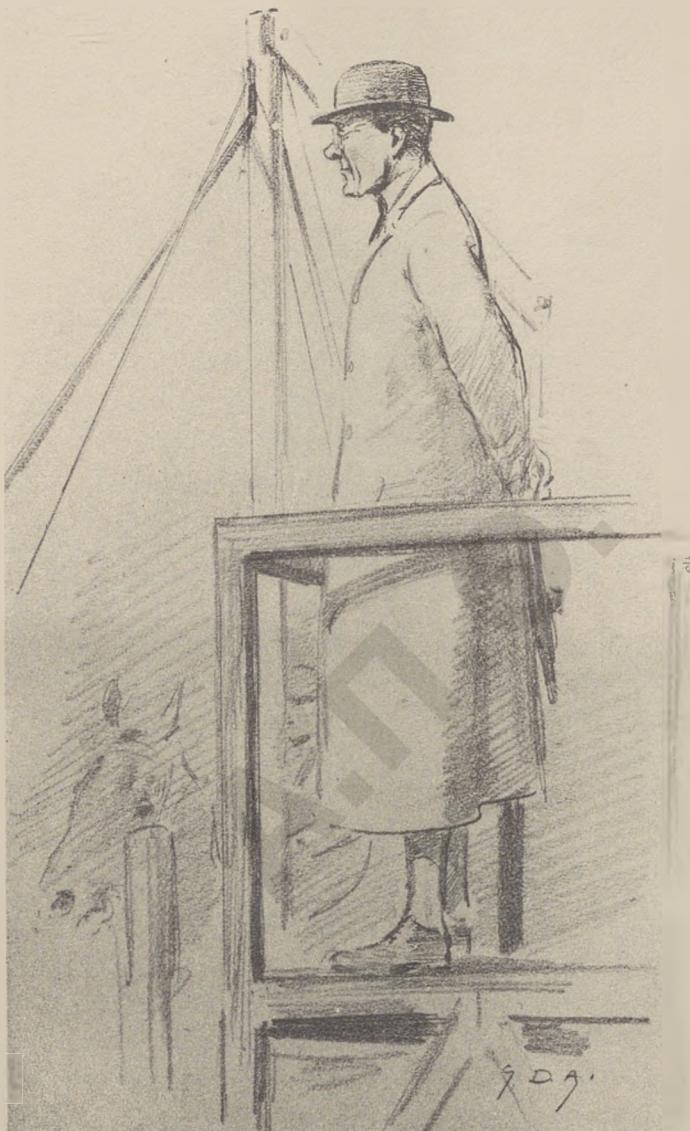
Will Dale

there until the horse at last gave in. So there are other methods besides the red-hot horseshoe. Most horses are easily deceived but are sometimes apt to revert to an old trick.

Will Ogilvie, the poet, to whom I have elsewhere referred, told me of an animal he once bought in Australia, which had a bad reputation as a buckjumper, but Will rode him for quite a long time before the horse discovered he was not quite as good a rider as he had thought, put him down, and was never to be relied upon again.

Thought-reading was very fashionable some years ago, a great exponent of it being Stuart Cumberland, who, I think, claimed its discovery. Perhaps he thought he did, but horses had known it long before that, and no better thought-reader has ever demonstrated the art. More than half the refusing horses do so from a feeling transmitted by the rider to his mount, it may be only the slightest passing doubt crossing his mind, but it is felt by the horse, either through the reins, or some other physical contact, equivalent to the hand-hold between the exponent and the medium in a human demonstration. As the saying goes, "Throw your heart over," and that both you and your horse will follow is as nearly a certainty as any such combined act can be. A pair of spurs may be used as confirmation of your determination, but the thought itself is of far more importance.

At the time we moved to Wiltshire, Will Dale was huntsman to the Duke: he was one of nature's gentlemen, the same to every one, gentle or simple, with a civil word for all, from nobleman to road-man breaking stones. Some of his remarks were full of humour, and they were often useful to me in suggesting material for *Punch*, to which I had begun to contribute.



*Early days of the Starting Gate
An impression of Mr. Arthur Coventry*

An Ash Wednesday Meet

I will mention only one. The incident occurred in Greatwood, a tremendous stronghold for foxes. A stranger galloped up to Will and said, "a fox had gone away at the bottom!" Hounds could be heard hunting above, and Will's answer was, "Thank you, sir, but I think the main body of them's up at the top." The Duke then hunted hounds two days a week, and Dale the other four. Perhaps the latter went on too long, as he really had ceased to ride up to his hounds; *anno Domini* and many accidents had begun to tell on a man who had been as hard as any in his day, but I shall always think of him as the nicest man in his position I have ever known.

I have mentioned Greatwood: travelling on the G.W.R. towards London, it can be seen on the left of the railway between Chippenham and Swindon. The name of this covert is famous from the fact that what many people consider the greatest run in hunting history took place from there. I have not any account by me to quote from, but I think they were in four different counties in the three and a half hours it lasted, and ended over thirty-five miles from kennels. The Duke, then Lord Worcester, finished it on a cob lent him by a farmer encountered by the way. I do not remember the date of the run, but the day was Ash Wednesday, and ever since then the Ash Wednesday meet has been held at the same place, Swallets-gate, in hope of a repetition of the great run.

I can remember only one occasion, and that chiefly because my wife got into Brinkworth Brook, when I was out on an Ash Wednesday. Being a day on which few hunts meet, a special train had brought a lot of strangers to swell the usual big field to half again its average size. I advised my wife to stick close to me, and to be sure to get a good start in front, when a fox

An Ash Wednesday Meet

went away. This we did, and after jumping a few fences found the brook before us. I got over, and galloped on, thinking she had probably pulled up, but when a check occurred two fields farther, some one told me my wife was in the brook. I galloped back to see her wading through the water just up to her tie, and her horse, a thoroughbred mare, said to be by St. Fruscan, still in the brook; we got both safely out after some trouble. Just when I was returning to the brook, I saw Tom Newman, then a whip, come at it full sail. His horse only got far enough to strike the bank with its chest, throwing Tom on the broad of his back on the landing side. I saw no more of that run, being fully occupied looking for a good Samaritan who could supply some dry articles of female apparel. These when found were, though welcome, far from stylish, and I always shall remember a red flannel petticoat as the *pièce de résistance*. The brook was a big one then, and now, I believe, is unjumpable, having been cleared and widened.

The long meets I have referred to decided us to leave Etchilhampton, and another change of house placed us better for hunting, though hardly in the pick of the country. Sandridge Cottage was its name, an appropriate one, as sand fine enough for an hour-glass could be dug in the garden. It was a rare place for foxes, being on the south side of a dry hill, with a chain of small woods along it. In late evening I have often asked visitors if they had ever heard a fox barking, and, taking them outside, could very often give them the opportunity. Many times also I would lie in bed and listen to a vixen's asthmatic sounding bark coming up towards, and passing, the house—a delightful lullaby, though it started off every dog within hearing, my own included. How little afraid a fox is of the ordinary



Joe Willis and the V.W.H. (Chicklade)

I Move to the V.W.H. Country

dog I had exemplified there one night. A fox had evidently come near the kitchen entrance, and my dogs, getting wind of him, raced him round an alleyway which ran between the house and a high bank behind. While in this, he ran, but getting into a thicket just below the house, judging by the noise, refused to run any more, and they in fact had him at bay. He evidently defied them for some time, and then either they tired of it or he slipped away, as all became quiet and the dogs came in.

While on the subject of animal peculiarities, I have often wondered at the sense of smell in horses, which is I think only second to that of deer. At Sandridge I had a very interesting illustration of this. We used sometimes to drive a very smart little Exmoor pony to meets, and one day when doing this, on turning into a lane off the main road, the pony, as plainly as possible, got wind of our two horses, and he threw his tongue, in other words, neighed, and kept it up all the way until we overtook them. Counting the time this took, I should say that they must have been a good mile ahead when he first spoke to the line. Some of the unaccountable shies horses make are, I believe, at smells of which our degenerate senses are quite unaware.

I lived at Sandridge for something like ten years, and might have been there still, had not the owner wanted my house. Since I could find nothing suitable nearer, we went to the V.W.H. (Cricklade) country. At that time Will Fuller hunted the country with Joe Willis as huntsman. A very sporting country it is too, rougher and more difficult to ride over than the Beaufort I think; most of it grass and deep holding clay, with big rough fences which require a strong well-bred horse to negotiate comfortably. I was lucky in having such a one

I Move to the U.W.H. Country

at the time. I got this horse up from grass and offered him to the remount buyer when the War began, also a mare of my wife's, but they were refused as too big—a sound reason generally, but wrong in this case, as both were such good doers that they would have survived many which they did buy. "Top of the Morning," my horse, might perhaps have taken a weak horseman right into the German lines, but he would have had a good ride for his money.



CHAPTER VIII

Drawing for the Press, Deer Stalking and various Commissions

TO hark back a little, in 1896, sometime after Phil May had made the suggestion, I sent some drawings to *Punch*; Phil, as I have said, had promised to draw the editor's attention to them, and fortunately Sir F. C. Burnand, then the editor, was interested. *De mortuis nil nisi bonum*, but the men who had been doing sporting subjects in *Punch* had not been very good artists, though undoubtedly good sportsmen; so there was not so much artistic kudos in getting a footing there. Burnand I always found very accessible, and glad to discuss any idea submitted, and to offer suggestions. He had a wide outlook, and did not think the world ended at the outskirts of the London suburbs, and he was, moreover, a very genial human personality, whose retirement I greatly regretted.

My first drawing appeared in October of that year, and frankly I don't think much of it now, but such work improves enormously with habit. An old book of proverbs suggested a series which ran for a time; needless to say, the illustrations somewhat travestied the original text, but they evidently amused some people, and soon suggestions began to come in, generally recounting incidents which seemed comical to the senders. Sometimes I agreed with the sender, sometimes the editor did not agree with either of us, and the drawing went into the

Drawing for "Punch"

scrap-heap. To deal with such things as hunting, or, in fact, any sport, if it is to appeal to those who participate in those sports, it is absolutely necessary to take part in them oneself. There are technicalities quite unnoticeable to the townsman, mistakes which would damn the picture entirely to the people who know,



Preliminary Sketch for a "Punch" drawing

and would cause them to laugh at the artist instead of at his joke. The necessity for this participation has been proved to me by the fact that, during nearly forty years contributing to *Punch* I have had, almost entirely, to find my own subjects. Not more than one or two per year have come through the editorial department, and these are generally such as might appeal to the townsman, but rarely to the practical sportsman. Another argument for participation is that, besides what one may observe oneself, it is the best way of picking up anecdotes and accounts of other people's experiences. Of course many of these incidents have not got the makings of a picture in them,

Drawing for "Punch"

and it is difficult to explain to the narrator that a story, however amusing, which covers a space of time, cannot be condensed into a small picture with a caption of a dozen words.

I cannot sufficiently acknowledge my indebtedness to the many good fellows, often quite unknown to me personally, who have helped me to "keep tamboreen a-rowlin," as was James Pigg's favourite expression; without their help things would have been very difficult. I have often been asked where jokes come from; as a general question this is quite unanswerable. But the kind of subject I generally treat almost invariably originated in some actual happening. Take one instance: the lady participant is, I regret to say, dead; the victim is, I hope, still alive, but, having a sense of humour, he will not resent my telling. The incident occurred with the Duke of Beaufort's hounds, some years ago. Two sportsmen rode up to a lady in the field, and one of them introduced the other to her as "Mr. Rabbits"; she, thinking he was what is vulgarly called pulling her leg, said, "Oh, dash it, what really *is* his name?" Explanation was difficult, as it really *was* Rabbits. This incident I illustrated, and it appeared in *Punch* in 1928 only with the name changed.

Personally I have had a soft spot for a series I ran with legends from Shakespearian quotations. I perhaps should apologize to the shade of Shakespeare, but they have never made his ghost walk. After Burnand's retirement, a different editorial régime came into operation in the *Punch* offices, and there was little or no contact between editor and contributors like myself. Subjects to illustrate were, or were not, sent to the artist, and many of these were not particularly calculated to spur him to his best work. I remember a set of peculiarly depressing verses being sent to me; I did my best with them, but my drawing

Problems of the Sporting Artist

never appeared. I have sometimes wondered whether they are saving it for my obituary; it would be suitable if not exactly flattering.

I have said that it was essential for the sporting artist to take an active part in the sports which he is trying to draw, and in my case this has been a pleasure as well as professional necessity. This, however, can operate adversely, as I once found in an argument with the income tax assessors. Pennel Elmhurst, ("Brooksby"), who long ago was chief, and best, hunting correspondent to the *Field*, established a precedent that allowance off income tax should be made for the keep of the hunters necessary to carry out his work. I tried this also, and ultimately got a decision in my favour, but during the argument it was suggested that I also got enjoyment out of hunting. I had to admit that, but countered by saying that enthusiasm was a very necessary part of professional equipment.

There were many other sports, not so democratic as hunting, which offered potential "copy," and, thanks to many good friends I managed to see a good deal of several of them. A dear old friend, now in the happy hunting-grounds, W. Heward Bell, afforded me, over a long series of years, the opportunity of grouse shooting, stalking, and salmon fishing. Year after year I went North in late September and saw the Highlands as they can only be seen in such circumstances. The stalkers, well educated, as so many Scotsmen in humble situations are, had often good stories to relate, and they knew how to tell them. Living, as they did most of the year, very solitary lives, they appreciated a congenial audience, and I owe them many good things, among them the stalker's words of comfort (to the rifle who had missed his beast) is one. "A stag's a queer

Highland Stalkers

beastie, there's a heap o' room aboot a stag," which I illustrated in *Punch* in 1912.

I once got some comfort from this saying in very different surroundings. When in Salonika during the Great War I found myself far from any kind of cover riding out in the open. Some enemy planes came over, our "Archies" started shelling them, and I heard the descent of shell cases and nose caps more than was healthy, but suddenly I remembered the old jest, and took heart of grace. Another saying I remember was that of a keeper replying to a visitor, who inquired what kind of a fishing season they had had: "The warst I ever saw, only four reel fushin' days, and three o' them was snappit up by the Sawbath." This I also illustrated and sent to *Punch* in December 1919.

What good fellows some of these Highlanders were and how interesting if they could be got to talk. Some read a great deal during the times in which they were snowed in, a common occurrence in most winters.

Such conditions led to a most tragic experience for Macdonald, a stalker, one of the nicest I ever knew.



Stalking Experiences

His cottage lay a good ten miles from the public road, and several more from the nearest house, the Forest Lodge. A terrible snowstorm quite snowed him up, drifting into the glen until all movement was limited to the few yards it was possible to clear. Macdonald's wife took ill and died, and he was left alone for weeks with his dead, unable to get her out or to get help from outside. I heard of it some time after I had been there, and also that it so affected his nerves that he had to leave the district. He had been the best of company on the hill, and his wife the kindest of people in her cottage; never would they let me start my long ride home without a tea that was, in its own setting, a meal for Lucullus.

I, of course, cannot claim to have done anything like the amount of deer-stalking some have, but, extending over more years than I care to contemplate, thanks to the kindness of friends, few autumns passed in which I did not spend some weeks among the high hills trying to outwit the wild red deer which inhabit them. During the earlier part of these years, I think I could claim to be a pretty good shot with a sporting rifle. I did not waste many shots, but as time went on, eyesight, and perhaps other things incident to increasing age, did not tend to improvement. I will, however, say for myself that I cannot now recall losing more than four stags in all that time, and such events made such a painful impression that it is unlikely to be forgotten. I do not think I was blood-thirsty, and a good stalk with a chance to study deer at close quarters, although it might not afford a shot, was not put down as a "black Friday." I have never carried a camera, but can quite understand the point of view of the people who nowadays say it is more interesting than a rifle. A sketch-book I always had, but it was supplementary to the lethal weapon.



Ponies Waiting, Benmore, Ross

Stalking Experiences

At Benmore, in Ross, I was spying with the head stalker when we observed a stag which was behaving curiously. It was a warm day with flies and midges very troublesome. This would generally have caused the deer to go higher up the hill where the wind would drive the pests away, but though the hinds which were in the stag's company were inclined to do this, the stag always remained at the foot of the hill. The stalker determined he must be wounded, and therefore, if possible, must be got. This, after an easy stalk, we did, to find that he was minus a fore foot. It had not been recently lost, probably the season before or earlier, as the end of the joint was quite callous, and so far as we had observed made no difference in his walking pace, nor had it caused irregularity in his horns, a common result of injury recently received.

For a near relation of mine, a firm believer in "cures" and chemists' shops, I have a stock phrase: "Give nature a chance." Surely this stag may be added to the many examples backing this principle.

At one time I was using a rifle, an old 303, the barrel of which was beginning to wear. I do not usually blame my tools for bad work, but it certainly was no longer accurate. This led to some unaccountable shooting, and to one at least which I had hoped to be a red-letter day becoming very much the reverse. It was the last day of the season, and my host, anxious to get his number, told me if possible to get three stags. Things looked hopeful; we found deer early in the forenoon in an easy place to approach, a short stalk, and a simple shot resulted in a miss. Still the deer did not go far, not having seen us at all, and again we got a chance at the same stag. I took another careful shot with everything in my favour, and broke a foreleg

Stalking Experiences

of the stag high up about the elbow joint. It, of course, went on downhill, with a lot of hinds, while we, waiting until they all had got far enough off, kept the glass on the stag. We saw him lie down twice, but always rise and struggle on towards the woods below. It was necessary that we should get before him, as once in the woods he was lost, and after a heart-breaking run, fortunately mostly on a down-grade, we thought we must be before him, and we cut in across the line he would likely take, winded and fatigued. Some rough ground offered cover and a view over part of the ground. Half an hour passed. He must have lain down again, so we started stalking back towards what we thought his route would be. At last we saw horns over the hillock behind which we were lying. He was coming to our right. A short run and he came along the hollow, travelling wonderfully fast considering his lameness. There was just a few yards before he would be covered again. I shot from the shoulder, standing. "Ye've missed," the stalker said, by now no doubt disgusted at my shooting. I did not see how such a thing was possible, as the poor beast was a bare thirty yards away, so we ran on and found him dead behind the next hill, satisfactory in itself, but a poor result of what was to have been my record day. It is a curious thing, which I have noticed more than once both when shooting myself and watching others do so, that a badly wounded animal seems no longer to suffer from the shock of a second shot, and this was an illustration of it. Though shot through the heart at thirty yards we saw no immediate effect. Many people tell of their successes stalking, as they do of betting, forgetting to mention the losses which are probably quite as numerous. My recollections I must admit are a mixture of both.





S. D. 4 PM 1900

Young Stags

Stalking Experiences

On one occasion I had taken a new rifle North with me—a Mauser Magnum—and had the satisfaction of killing dead two stags with the first two shots within ten yards of each other. Even past painful experiences could not prevent my inwardly



Waiting for the Bag

feeling I was something nearly "it," but the third shot rather adjusted the balance again. It was on a terribly stormy wet day. We had had difficulty in finding deer, all I suppose being sheltered in deep corries and places hard to spy. At last, however, we saw two stags lying under shelter of a rocky ridge. Little stalking was necessary, but I had to crawl in between two rocks to get the shot, which, considering the weather, I decided to take without waiting for the beast to get up, which might entail lying there for an hour or more. I fired and the stag fell

Stalking Experiences

over, to all appearances stone dead without any movement whatever. I lay still for perhaps a minute, and then began to back out of my cramped position on hands and knees. Just as I arose, rifle on "safe," he jumped up, gave a stagger, and vanished over the ridge never to be seen again. He had been stunned by a touch of the bullet somewhere above the backbone, "creased" as it is called. The same rifle shot with perfect satisfaction for several years after that, until a comparatively recent date, when my shooting seemed to go all wrong, and at last I had to send it back to the maker, who discovered that some cartridges I had bought from another maker were wrongly charged for that particular weapon. I mention this, in case some one in similar circumstances may think he can buy rifle cartridges as he can shot-gun ammunition, for this is not so. The charge and the sighting have close relationship, of which I was then unaware. Always buy ammunition from the maker of the rifle and you have some one to blame, if, of course, it is not yourself. Also always take out more than you expect to use. The old 303 I have referred to demonstrated that to me very painfully once when I had to leave a wounded stag through running out of "bullets," as the stalkers always call cartridges.

No one knows the Highlands who sees them from a road; I have looked down upon many an eagle's nest, and seen the royal bird from all angles, the young newly-fledged sitting not far from the nest and the old ones soaring circles above, as no other bird does. I have watched a couple of hill foxes hunting among the stones for the unconsidered trifles that may be a *bors d'œuvre* to the more solid part of their meal, all unconscious of my presence.

The Highland Scene



THE EAGLES

Most people look to the sky for a rainbow, but on the high tops, on a showery day, they are often to be seen far below in the valley. What wonderful walks home one had too; perhaps both ponies are loaded with stags, and the ten miles to the lodge have to be tramped. No chance to get anything like home in daylight, dark comes down, but the moon is just showing, and will soon be up. Stags are roaring defiance at each other, in several directions; the path may be made of broken-up marble. I know one that is for several miles,

and in the half light it looks like a silver path to fairyland. What do those who come hundreds of miles in a car know of all that? True they do not get so tired, but neither do they take home the appetite that turns a big bottle of beer into drink fit for the gods, and hare soup and a grouse better than the turtle soup of the city banquet, or the legendary peacocks' tongues of the Roman epicure.

Any sportsman will appreciate the pleasure of collecting material for one's work in such a pleasant way. There were few blank times in the year, and in these pictures could be painted; sometimes portraits of horses, dogs, and people, separate or all combined, came along, and an occasional book to illustrate. It was a good life, but had its drawbacks as most

Illustrating Humorous Anecdotes

things have; I was always poor. Sport, even when given by friends, costs money; an occasional horse had to be bought for use in the hunting season, and had to be kept all the year round. There were troubles with editors, who would not realize that long experience taught what one's particular public wanted. No one would expect an editor to accept everything submitted to him, but if there was a court of appeal I think some judgments would be reversed. To take only one instance of many. A friend of mine, Sir Lionel Darell, an ex-Life Guards officer, told me of an experience of his own when a member of a committee selecting a stallion for improvement of horse-breeding in his district. He said when a black horse was shown, "No, no. I have had enough black horses in my lifetime," and the dealer answered, "Oh, undertaking I suppose?" Sir Owen Seaman could not see any humour in this and thought it might offend the Life Guards. But it always struck me as extremely funny.

Some years before that I had done a drawing of a four-in-hand coach for the *Field*, and was hurriedly summoned to Town by wire. It turned out that some one on the board of directors objected to the hat worn by a lady on the box seat. The said hat was about the size of a threepenny bit in the drawing, and would be a good deal smaller when reproduced. It had to be improved, so, with the help of a Scots lady, then Sir Theodore Cook's secretary, we brought it up to date, and I returned the hundred miles I had come for this important duty. I may mention that since that time the *Field* has changed hands and possibly methods. As a matter of fact the editor, in this case, was not responsible for the incident, and I think, shared the amusement his secretary and I derived out of it.



Roffey on his Chestnut Mare

From "Hunting Tours of Surtees," by E. D. Cuming (William Blackwood & Sons, Ltd.)

Book Illustration

Theodore Cook, if rather sententious in style, was a fine fellow, a scholar and a gentleman, for whom it was a pleasure to work. I wrote a good deal for him at one time, and, when I apologized for the non-literary character of my efforts, he comforted me by saying: "Never mind that, you generally have something to say anyway." I hope that there may be, among those who read these pages, some as charitable.

At about the time when I went to live at Sandridge, I began illustrating in colour a considerable number of books for Hodder and Stoughton, the publishers. I think this was one of the most interesting jobs of work I ever had, if I except the more purely picture-painting, which I carried on as opportunity offered. The first of these books, published in 1908, was called *Hunts with Jorrocks*, being those parts of R. S. Surtees's great book, *Handley Cross*, which dealt exclusively with fox-hunts. Some of my friends objected that this had already been done by John Leech; I found, however, that there were so many incidents crying out for illustrations left undone, that the objection was not a reasonable one. There was only one case in the whole book, I think, where I used the same passage as Leech had done. In a foreword to this book, I said that Leech had fixed the types of the characters described by Surtees for all time and that I therefore should adhere to them. Evidently there were people who did not think my work superfluous, as the book was a great success. I exhibited the drawings and sold almost all. They were water-colours painted on holland, a method invented by Joseph Crawhall, most of whose fine pictures were on this material.

We followed with *Jorrocks Lectors*, which, I think, also went well. I forget the order in which they came, but several others

Book Illustration

succeeded these, the most notable being that great classic, *Thoughts on Hunting*, by Peter Beckford. This, though published first in 1781, had not, so far as I know, been illustrated. It was a great opportunity, and very interesting to do, as Beckford still holds its place as the best of all the many books written about hunting, and I consider it was a privilege to be associated with the classic.

Sport, Past and Present was another book I did, in conjunction with E. D. Cuming; he gathered and edited all the best that had been written on sport of all kinds. Any one who has the book may have noticed one curious omission in the section on racing. These two books were chosen for the Leipsic World Exhibition of Illustrated Books.

I have never had more pleasant relations with any publishers than with Messrs. Hodder and Stoughton, but, at the time I am referring to, there was some one in the firm who suggested that racing should be left out. This, of course, was impossible, and, after some discussion, a compromise was reached. Racing might be included, but there should be no betting mentioned.

While on the subject of books, I might mention one very notable one, though it came some considerable time after those referred to, after the War in fact, Masefield's *Reynard the Fox*. That wonderful narrative poem is especially remarkable from the fact that the author had never hunted on a horse in his life. I met Masefield several times with reference to this book, and asked him what inspired him to write it, his answer being that he thought hunting one of the gayest and most stirring things in country life. To all who have read the poem it is unnecessary to say it shows a real knowledge of the subject, even if picked up from the point of view of the foot follower, proving the



An Illustration for John Masefield's "Reynard the Fox"
(William Heinemann Ltd.)

Book Illustration

truth of the saying that the onlooker sees most of the game—at least, if he has the faculties of a John Masefield.

Many practical hunting folks thought they had spotted one technical error in his description of hearing whip's horn calling tail hounds out of cover; but they were all wrong as, though exceptional, there were several packs where this was practised.

I do not think there could be a more modest man than the Poet Laureate considering all he has done, and when I saw him I was always particularly struck by the way he seemed to regard his own work. He might have been an earnest young fellow trying to write verse for a living, instead of the recognized author of so much fine work. I have not known many poets, and somehow one almost expects them to be different from other people, but here was a man who had lived among men of all kinds, and found in them and their doings fine material for poetry.

As a sportsman I love the second, the hunt, part of *Reynard the Fox*, but the first part—the description of all coming to the meet—is surely the most wonderful bit of concise word-painting ever written. One can imagine the dreary catalogue a lesser artist might have made of it.

With a few exceptions, I never was satisfied with my illustrations to the book, but like everybody else at the time after soldiering, I had hardly got into my stride.

CHAPTER IX

Austria-Hungary and America, 1910-12

IN the autumn of 1910, I went to Austria and Hungary for the *Field*, in connection with the question of supplying horses for Territorial units in this country. An old friend of mine, H. H. Mulliner, who was Hon. Colonel of a Warwickshire Territorial Howitzer Brigade, which he had been instrumental in raising, was very dissatisfied with the haphazard methods employed in horsing all such units, and, hearing of a system in use in Austria, he interested the *Field* and some other papers in the subject. The result was that the *Field* sent me there to investigate the principle on which it was run, and to do illustrated articles.

Supplied with an introduction to Count Kinsky, then Master of Horse to the Emperor Franz Joseph, his kindness opened my way to everything there was to be seen. I saw, drew, and measured a great many horses in military use, got details of the system, and wrote a series of articles on the whole subject. These, helping Colonel Mulliner's work at home, resulted in a modified use of the same system to horse several batteries here. In a few words, the system was buying instead of hiring horses, and lending them to tradesmen and others, subject to having the use of them for annual training and at certain other times. It proved a great success, the horses were better, the men knew them and were better also, and, last but not least, as had been foreseen, they supplied at once, at the outbreak

Trotting Races in Vienna

of the Great War, a limited number of trained horses ready for service, and, but for the changes brought about by mechanization, I have no doubt the system would have been much further developed.

While in Vienna I incidently saw, for the first time, high-class trotting races. Ordinary racing had finished, the trotting season begun, and every Sunday there was a meeting, where

prizes up to a thousand pounds in value were run for. Some things about the trotting were new to me; in the start of a handicap, for instance, the competitors were distributed all round the ring according to their handicap, the head starter being situated on the top of a central building or tower, from which he could see the whole course, and pass the starting signal to others round the course. This, for the inexpert spectator, rather spoiled the fun, making it almost impossible to know where the various competitors were during a race, as they sometimes overlapped each other. I was much struck by the fact that big,





Trotting Races in Vienna

The Old Spanish School Riding

fat men always seemed to be picked as drivers; it may be that weight was necessary to keep the sulky, or trotting wagon, down. I do not know, but, dressed in full jockey costume, they made funny figures. This was not lessened when, in the case of the winner, he was, I will not say crowned, but encircled by a hugh laurel wreath round his ample middle, and drove around and out of the course bearing this girth of honour.

The old Spanish *Haute École* in the Royal Palace riding school was very interesting, and I spent a good deal of time there. In an annexe to that was a small circus ring, which the late Empress of Austria, well known for her horsemanship, used privately for circus riding, jumping through paper rings, etc., before a few friends. I unintentionally offended one of the professional riders, whose daily duty was riding the *Haute École* horses, by telling him, in exceedingly bad French, that I had seen something of the same kind at a circus the night before. "Non! Non! ce n'est la même chose! Ici c'est la Vieille École Espagnole, ce n'est pas un cirque! Non, non!" He would hardly speak to me for days afterwards. Since then these horses have made two visits to the International Show in London, and have been very popular. When in Vienna I made a pretty complete set of drawings of this, which I afterwards presented to our own Cavalry School and which are now at the Equitation School at Weedon.

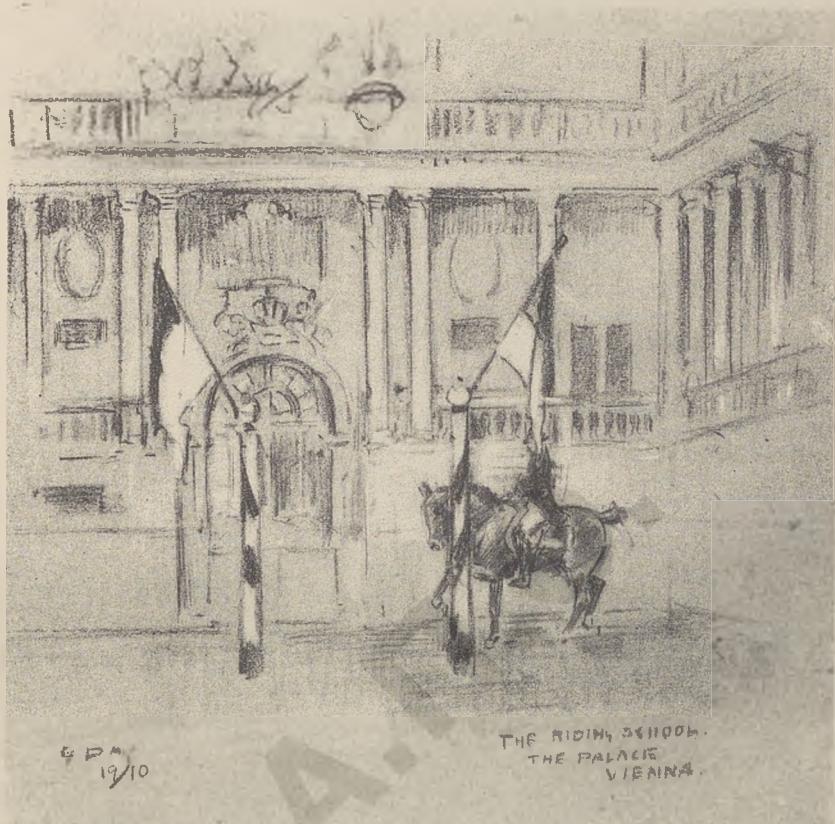
A visit to the Cavalry School in Hungary was of much interest. A letter from the Master of Horse to Count Clam, one of the two commandants, paved the way. I was most hospitably received and saw something of their system. They had a pack of hounds and hunted carted deer, but were not doing this at that time. I inadvertently gave the mess a good

An Argument re Hackneys

laugh. When leaving, several had asked me to stay another night, but I had to refuse, and, in explaining the reason, in my execrable French, that I had made an appointment to go to Budapest with a friend, I substituted “une” for “un,” causing screams of laughter; apparently I had, by my mistake, struck on a well-known institution among these young dogs. They were a very nice lot, for the most part young fellows seconded from their regiments for a course at the Cavalry School. I should have liked very much to have stayed longer and seen their work more in detail, but time would not allow.

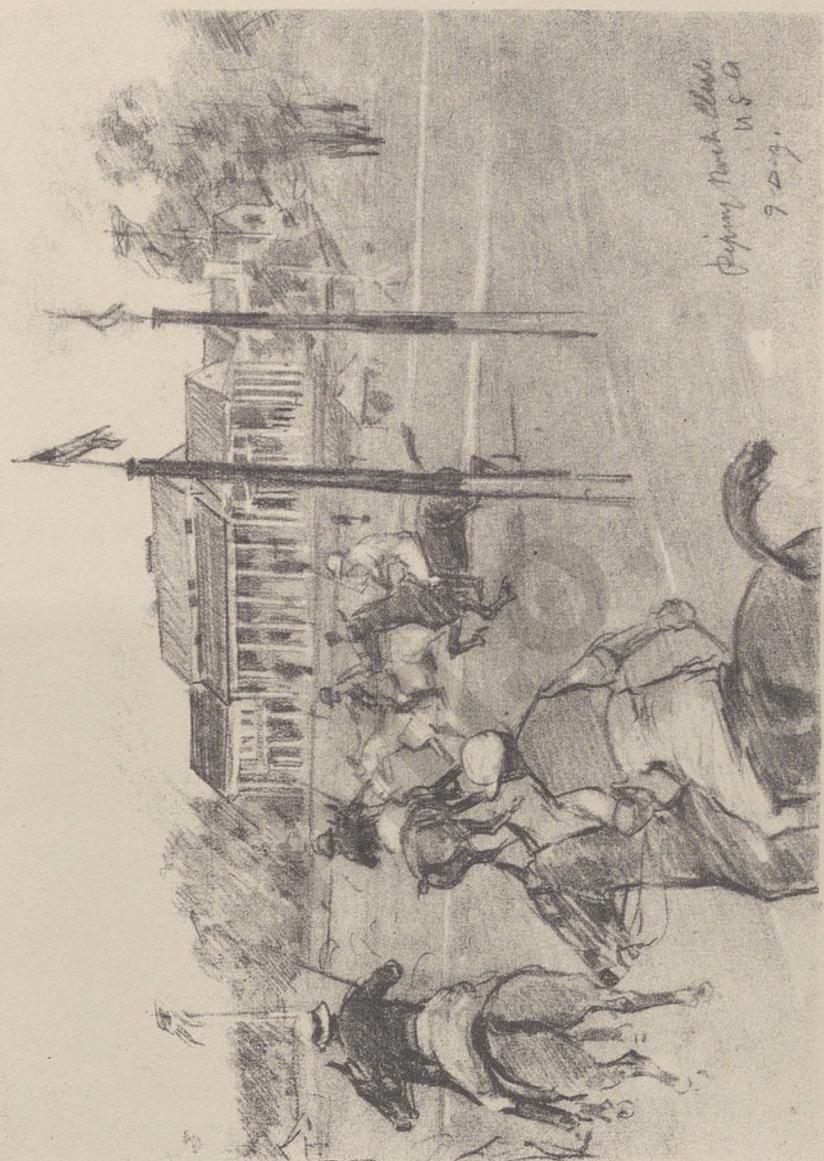
Among their other duties was trying—that is, riding, hunting and racing—the stallions which were intended for horse-breeding in the country. They were all put through the mill, and if reported on adversely, were gelded and sold. I was told a rather interesting point about these stallions: that they seldom fell, and seemed to have more intelligence than geldings. Franz Joseph’s Government was, and had been for years, taking great trouble over horse-breeding, importing each year, mostly from Ireland, horses and mares of various types. I had an opportunity of seeing that season’s imports, and the stock bred from that of former years, crossed with their native animals or former crosses, all pedigrees being carefully kept. There were, of course, successes and failures, the worst results, I was told, were where they had tried hackney blood; these were condemned out of hand.

In writing afterwards, I mentioned this, and an amusing correspondence arose out of it in the *Field*, with an individual who, hiding under a *nom de plume*, took up the cudgels to champion hackneys as the best type for remount purposes. He declined to accept my statement that I was quoting my hosts in Hungary,



THE RIDING SCHOOL.
THE PALACE
VIENNA.

G.P.A.
1910



Polo at New York
1913

An Argument re Hackneys

so finally I suggested a rather old-fashioned way of settling the question, offering to ride an old tubed hunter blood mare I had against any hackney he could produce, the course to be anything over fifty miles, preferably, though not necessarily, part across country. He declined with the excuse that he had nothing suitable at the time, which put an end to the correspondence. I was sorry the proposed match came to nothing, as, though I had only paid the sum of ten pounds for the mare I proposed using, if all England had been combed out, there could not have been a more suitable animal found. A perfect hack, that could, without any effort, trot ten miles an hour for as long as you pleased, and jump any country in reason, she had also been "placed" in very good company—point-to-point racing in the Midlands.

I have no quarrel with the hackney as such. No doubt the original breed, created for utility in old time journeying, must have been at his best a good horse. But artificial requirements have altered all that and produced a wonderful type for show, but precious useless anywhere else. Just think of an unfortunate individual, say a commercial traveller of two hundred years ago, whose daily task included long rides from one town to another, having to ride the modern show hackney; he wouldn't last long, nor in fact would his means of conveyance. It would be a toss up which died first!

About 1911-12, I forget which, I entered into a contract to work for *Country Life*, in which I agreed to do three or four drawings of subjects connected with sport and country matters generally each week. A writer, now dead, was supposed to supply literary matter to accompany them, and did so for a time. I do not underrate the difficulty of this which, I think, was almost an

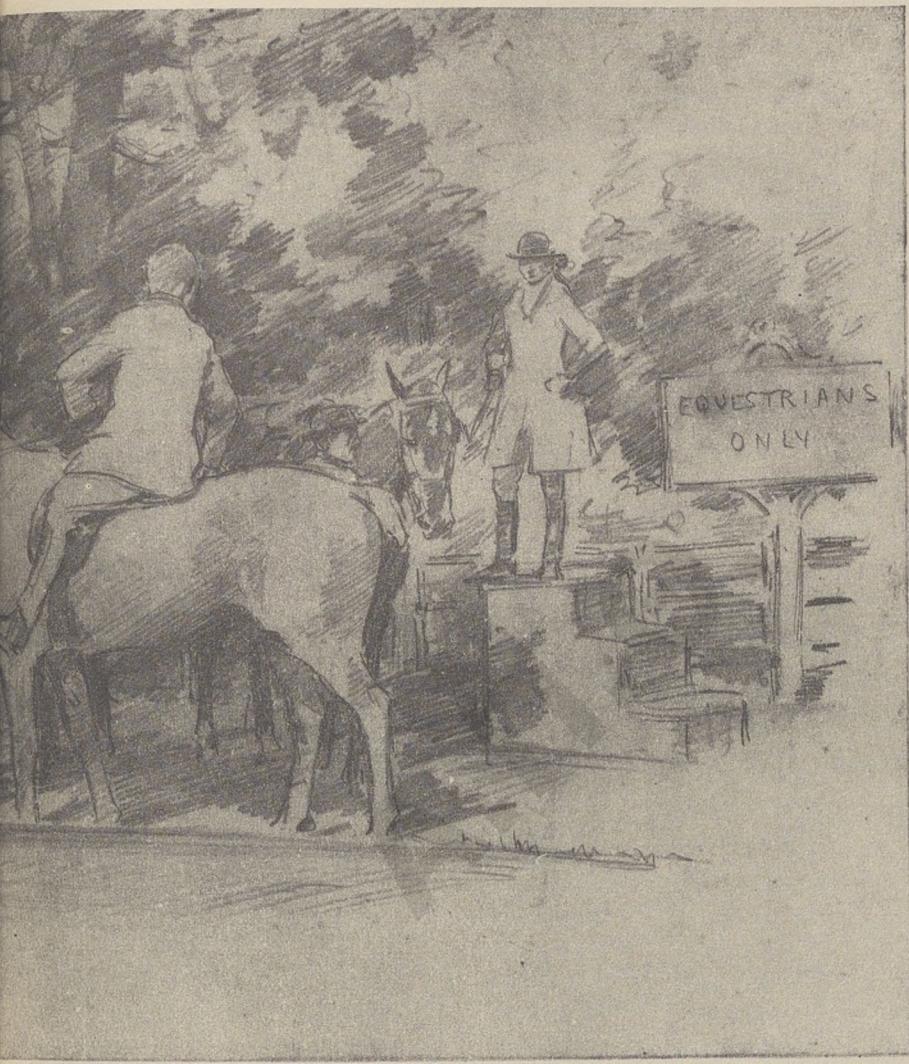
Illustrating American Polo

impossibility, considering that I often dealt with a subject of passing interest which he had not seen. In any case, the result led to mere word-spinning, and ultimately led to my having to do the writing myself. Altogether it was hard work, but I liked it. At that time *Country Life* was, I think, a good deal ahead of most weekly papers in the matter of paper and printing, and in view of this I tried drawing most things in pencil—a favourite medium of mine and a new thing for a weekly paper, I think. I drew and wrote about anything I knew connected with sport or country generally, but most regrettably, I had to give up after about two years' hard but enjoyable work.

In 1913 I went, for *Country Life*, to America for the International Polo Matches, in which our team was beaten. I had never been in U.S.A. before, so it was very interesting. I went to stay, in the first place, with a friend—now no more—Henry Earl, whom I had seen a good deal of when he came over (as he did for several years) in what he called his vacation, to play polo in the country tournaments after the London season concluded. He was one of the nicest Americans I have known. Not a very good polo player, and reputed rather dangerous, owing to a habit of galloping round instead of stopping his pony on a turn. He was so keen, and such a good fellow, that such things were pardoned in him, which would not have been in other people. I did not cross with the team, though I went to see the ponies embarked about a month before the date fixed for the matches and I followed about a week later. There was, I remember, a discussion as to whether it was best to send ponies over long enough to acclimatize, or just before the matches, and the former was decided on. I am not sure if it proved right or not. The weather was distressingly hot, and



Central Park, New York



The Mounting Stones

Impressions of New York

though I have been in more tropical climes, I do not think I have ever felt heat so much as that June in New York. A perpetual turkish bath is the nearest illustration I can think of to describe it.

After a couple of days with my friends the Earls, in a brand-new house they had just built on Long Island, I was made an honorary member of Meadow Brook Club, and took up residence there. It was a good centre from which to go to see the many practice games played at various grounds, mostly at Piping Rock Club, where our team was living. I found Meadow Brook very dull and lonely, as few members came near it, since all polo had been stopped pending the matches, so I changed to the Garden City Hotel a few miles away. I think I earned a reputation for eccentricity there, because whenever it was possible, I used to walk to most objectives instead of driving in an automobile. Only "stony-brokes" and negroes out of work would do such a thing, and those travelling by car used to stare at me as a curiosity. I did not really see much of New York itself, though there several times, the heat, as it was, making Long Island a much more pleasant place to stay. In fact, Long Island is an exceedingly nice place altogether, especially when you consider its nearness to a big city.

New York itself was a great surprise. Like every one else, I associated it with "sky scrapers," but, never having seen one, pictured some kind of over-grown factories, the biggest thing I was familiar with here; but passing the statue of Liberty and entering the great river, that delusion was quite dispelled. On that fine June morning the great buildings looked like things made of lace, their thousands of windows making the pattern and the whole thing elegant and light. Besides their appearance,

Impressions of New York

I should think that in such heat as was then, being able to shoot up by express lift to something like a thousand feet above the sea, to where you had to spend the most part of every day was no small advantage. In fact, I can imagine a doctor prescribing a fortnight near the top of the Woolworth Building to a patient in want of bracing up. What a view there was too, if American business men ever have time to contemplate such things. I could have spent a long time watching the tiny ships shooting about here and there, like the water-beetles one sees on a pond. When I was up there the spire of a church was pointed out to me as having been the highest point in New York thirty years before. A very small pepper pot standing on the floor as viewed from the top of a ladder, gives some faint idea of its appearance. I was greatly impressed by the station I had most occasion to use, the Pennsylvania Railway. Entered down a very handsome flight of steps, there was a great frieze of maps in low-relief, showing the country served by the railway, decorating the upper part of the walls, and down at the foot of the stairs, a huge hall in which crowds of people ran about like ants in a nest. No trains in evidence at all. These, however, were quite easy to find. We are accustomed to think of American manufactured things as clever and smart, but not enduring, things to be worn out and scrapped; but that station looked as if it would last as long as the world did.

I had a great disappointment over the matter of an exhibition of pictures which friends had arranged for me in New York. I took the pictures over, but found that there was a heavy duty—prohibitive in fact—to be paid before they could be landed. Argument was of no avail, we offered to pay on all



New York. International Match, 1913
(Drawn for "Country Life")



D. Milburn (U.S. Back)

The International Polo Teams, 1913

sold, to exhibit them in bond, so to speak, but nothing would move the Customs authorities. At last they conceded that they should be landed on the understanding that they were not for sale. This, of course, destroyed the whole thing, as the dealer's remuneration had to come from sale alone—as also had mine—and neither he nor I cared to spend anything on the advertising necessary. In fact, the whole thing was killed dead in advance though we did hang them up. Shortly after this, the duty on pictures was removed, remaining only on frames, and this, I believe, is still in force.

Of polo I, of course, saw many of the practice games, but have only a vague recollection of them. Mixed teams, I dare say they were more enlightening to our opponents than to me. At last, however, the great day came. Meadow Brook had, indeed, waked up from what I had known while living there.

It is a rather old story now and my impressions may not be as fresh or accurate as they were, but "The Big Four" made polo history, and are still spoken of with reverence. For the last few days I had heard of little else, even among people unconnected with the game. The general enthusiasm was such as I have never seen on this side of the Atlantic over any game. Curiously, my recollection is better of the first game than the second, so I confine myself to how that struck me.

The British team consisted of Captain Leslie Cheape, Captain Noel Edwards, Captain Ritson, Captain V. Lockett, in the order named. Spares were Lord Wodehouse and F. M. Freake.

The American side that year was what they called "The Big Four": Harry Payne Whitney (Captain), the two Waterburys and, last but not least, Devereux Milburn, then, as Lord Wodehouse,

The "Big Four" of Polo, 1913

one of our spares, said to me at one of the matches, worth at least two goals more than any one in the game.

I cannot, after this space of time, describe the matches point by point, nor, if I could, would my account be of much value, as, though I have played mild polo, it does not entitle me to give expert opinion. Milburn's play was always a joy to watch, and some of his defending shots marvellous. He could loft the ball over every one's head half-way up the ground, either forward or backhand, as I do not think I have ever seen done by any one else. Both the Waterburys were strong, good hitters, and very certain at all angles before goal, and I think Whitney, the captain, was also exceedingly capable in that respect.

In connection with the first match, I was particularly struck with this—certainly surmise also—that in practice games the American captain had probably noticed that our men were rather given to starting slow—that is, of course, comparatively speaking—and warming up in pace as things developed, and had given instructions to his men to go all out from the throw in. Be this as it may, they put on two goals within two or three minutes of the start, and it appeared to me, kept the ball out of the middle line of the ground and play as far as possible afterwards.

It struck me that the big four were not pretty horsemen, not, at least, so good to look at as our own. But even this they seemed to turn to good account, their forward seat enabling them, sometimes, to hit some most difficult shots round the fore-end of their ponies. L. Waterbury hit one of their goals in this way, when appearing almost to sit on his pony's neck. I think, also, they were rather given to taking chances. I do not remember the detailed score, but so far as I do remember,



A Practice Game at Piping Rock
A near side shot by Leslie Cheape



9.D.477002.

International Polo, America, 1913
Larry Waterbury Scoring



THE REVEREND DR. HOOKER

(Reproduced from "Hunting Tours of Surtees," by permission of Messrs.
Blackwood)

According to Surtees, the Rev. Dr. Hooker, about 1830, combined the duties of clergyman, schoolmaster, Master of Hounds and Whip. When hunting he wore a sailor's black jacket over his green coat, as represented.

The “Big Four” of Polo, 1913

the penalties cost them three half-goals, no penalties against the British team. All round, I think they were better mounted than our men, had faster ponies, and, of course, had then, as now we also have, no size limit. One of Milburn’s ponies dwells in my memory, though I have forgotten his name. He would not have looked out of place in a Grand National field, and was so good that, I think, he came out for three chukkers in the match. The matches were played in tremendous heat, beneath a literally brazen sky, which was very trying for all concerned. Those in authority allowed me to see the games from the boards, or anywhere I wished, not perhaps the best view to have of the whole points of the game, but offering me a chance to see details of it more useful from a pictorial point of view, and without obstruction from such things—if I may say so—as the expansive hats which ladies then used to wear.

I think the American influence speeded up polo as it did racing, and I am sure that the pace at which these international games go necessitates those taking part being in the youthful prime of life and absolutely fit to stand the strain entailed, to say nothing of the ponies.

At the time of which I am speaking, that “Big Four” was a wonderful team, considering how comparatively few people played polo in America, and, if I may say it without offence, the four and the few spares were really the only players of first-class in the country. I think, also, at the time, most of the spare men were recognized as a considerable way behind the four, though I dare say they trained on afterwards.

The time of the polo matches happened to coincide with the resumption of racing, which had been stopped in New York

Impressions of American Racing

State for several years—I do not know why—and I went to the first meeting, held at Belmont. It was interesting to compare it with our racing here, though perhaps that first meeting was not a fair criterion to judge by. In many ways it differed from our practice. The so-called modern racing seat was to be seen in its most exaggerated form, the jockeys'



knees generally being quite above the level of the horses' backs, and their hands within about a foot of the horses' mouths. Stable boys were chiefly negroes, as were men who bore on their caps the title, "Jockey's



The American Team. An impression of Larry Waterbury



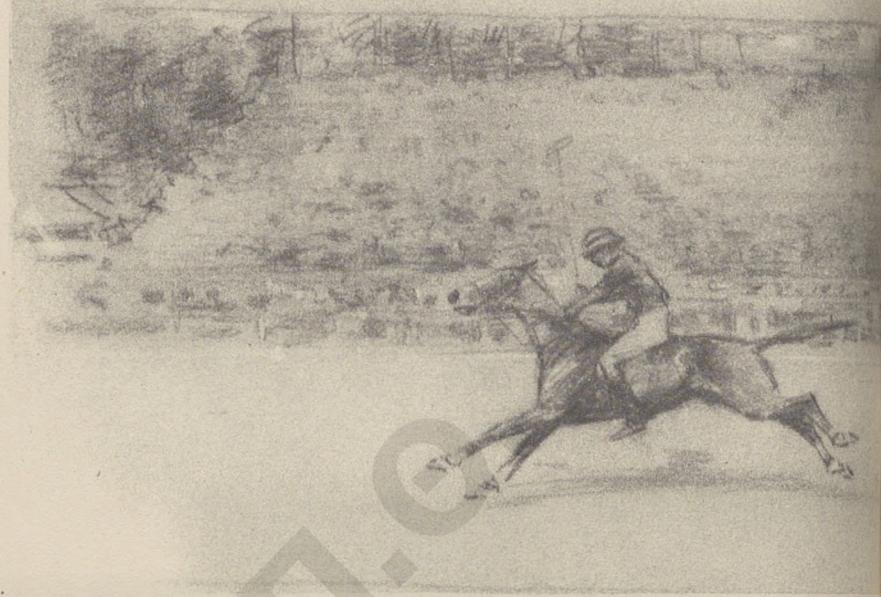
Impressions of American Racing

Valet"—these, not the jockeys, after a race, carried in the saddles, I could not see whether after or before weighing in, but I rather think the latter. Most of the horses engaged in a



A Coon Kennelman

race were accompanied in the paddock, and on to the race-course, by a "hack" ridden by a coloured stable lad, who returned immediately the racehorse started to canter down to the post. I could not follow why this was done, and being alone had no one to enlighten my ignorance. The jockey's racing kit was, to my eye, curious. Cap and jacket differed little from what we are accustomed to, but when it came to breeches, these did not, according to our idea, fit at all, looking something like long, loose drawers with a few buttons along the outside, evidently



Capt. T. Ritson

for decoration only, as they had nothing to do with the fit of the garments. They were met by racing-boots, much wrinkled, and only coming less than half way to the knee. The track was more earth than grass and it occurred to me that the last man in the field got a considerable bombardment of this all the way, unless he was near enough to the others to be shielded by them. It may be, of course, that during the cessation of racing, the course had deteriorated and could not be taken as typical, but one missed the green grass and carefully kept lawns generally seen here.



making a Run

During my stay Long Island was visited by a plague of caterpillars, which seemed to make a march across large strips of country, cutting the leaves of all trees in their way into strips, as if a multitude of people with scissors had snipped them into pieces and scattered the scraps all over the ground. My first host's house was in a little wood, every tree of which was entirely bared, and, before I left, the house was stuck all over with cocoons, into which the caterpillars had retired, pending, I suppose, the moth or butterfly stage they would reach. I have often wondered what came out of these.



Just before the International Match

America *V. England*

CHAPTER X

Family Matters & Some Notes on French Hounds

I HAVE made little mention of family matters; somehow such things seem so personal to oneself that, though of daily and hourly interest, and not a little anxiety, one hardly wants to inflict them on others. There was a favourite Scots' story of some one who, in the west of Scotland, was engaging a man servant of some kind, and, on inquiring where the applicant for the job came from, could get nothing more definite than "Renfrewshire"; further cross-questioning wrung from the man, "Weel, I cam frae Paisley, but, shure as death, I couldna help it." Well, my wife did not come "frae Paisley," but not very far from it, though separated by the great river Clyde. We had two boys, whose early youth was, I suppose, much like other children's, and, as such, of interest only to their parents and themselves. Both were born in England, they went to preparatory school at Weymouth, followed by Osborne and Dartmouth Naval Colleges for the elder, and Malvern and Cranwell Royal Air Force College for the younger. Both did well, particularly on the athletic side; details of these matters would bore the reader, and as photographs of athletic teams bore all but those who figure in them, I think the best record was my elder son winning, among many other sprint events, the Freshmen's hundred yards at Cambridge University, when doing two terms there after the War, in compensation for time docked from Dartmouth, when cadets went direct to warships. His

Family Matters

first ship was the newly-commissioned *Renown*, one of the battle-cruiser fleet at that time, with her sister ship *Repulse*, the fastest big ships we had. I believe they were out many times looking for trouble, but never actually got in touch with the enemy.



Seats of the "Mitey"

The *Renown* and her ship's company took King Edward VIII on his first visit to Canada, and had, in consequence, a royal reception wherever they went. The only fly in the ointment, from the point of view of the junior officers, was that in the midst of the gaiety their examinations came on. How they weathered that storm is always a matter of wonder to me, but my "snotty" son got through to promotion; perhaps the examiners tempered the wind to the lambs.

In May of the memorable year 1914, along with a friend, Captain Allen Palmer, I made a visit to France for the purpose of seeing some of the old breeds of hounds that were to be found



J. N. Waterbury

French Hounds

there. I have had no opportunity of knowing if they all still exist, or if the War caused their dispersion, but I have been told that in France the rationing of such establishments was much more drastic than even here, where many packs were reduced almost to vanishing-point. If this was so, there would be more difficulty in re-establishment there than with us, owing to the greater variety of type. No doubt they could be restarted, but, in all probability, at the expense of type, of which they seemed to be very particular. Like most of my wanderings, this expedition was conducted on somewhat casual lines.

Examination of the *Annulaire de Venerie* showed us—if it was to be believed—of what blood the respective “équipages” consisted, and we chose those which showed none or little English cross, our intention being to see as many purely French types as possible.

Casually again, though on advice of an experienced friend, we did not trouble to get any of the various documents with which visitors must supply themselves when intending to motor through France. On our arrival at Le Havre the boat was met by an Automobile Club Agent, who asked for our papers, and when told that we had none, gave us a pitying look, and remarked that it would take us all day to get clearance. This we took quite philosophically, being fortified by a good breakfast, and in the enjoyment of the morning smoke. As a matter of fact, it took us about half an hour, and cost a cigarette to the dock policeman who showed us where to go.

An old Ford car was our transport, a deposit of thirty pounds gave it right of entry, and we gaily rattled up the street towards Rouen. Being Sunday, and no one asking us for a licence, we delayed taking out any until the next day, and being forgotten

French Hounds

then, and for several more days, on account of the very rural places we halted at, in the end it was entirely forgotten, and we rattled about for three weeks without any official authorization at all, except a receipt for the deposit on the old "Tin Lizzie."

We had a fairly good map, and looked up the various kennels on it. Fortunately, I think, most of the Masters were absent in Paris, for, I suppose, the spring season, but when we drifted into the kennels, and addressed the hunt servants in most villainous French, we were graciously received everywhere. It would take too long to go into the various breeds of hounds we saw, though all were apparently bred with the same object and the same qualifications required of them. For hunting stags in the great forests, they must have "cry." Invisible most of the time, they must be heard if not seen. When we began to understand the terms used to denote their qualities, we got a lot of interesting information. Individuals excelled in certain things. A hound was pointed out in more than one pack that could always be depended upon to stick to the hunted stag, and we were told a story of one of them. After a chase had been given up, and on the way home, they happened to cross the line of the hunted stag, and this hound taking it up they ran this line and ultimately took the stag. Others were described as "good in the attack"; we took this to mean that they had what we call here "drive." It was all very interesting, and the men very similar in their outlook to the same class here, and all keen as they should be. To have hounds under great command seemed to be a point generally desired, and we saw this illustrated in one kennel, which we visited about feeding time. The huntsman let hounds in to the trough, but held them up from



Otter Hunting

A Remedy for Distemper

feeding, heads over it, until he gave the sign, when the usual gobbling took place instantly.

In all, we saw something over twenty packs, large and small, and in the case of the larger ones, I do not think it possible to



Setters at lunch time

have improved on the management, all were clean and well run. My friend Palmer had been hunting one of the packs of the Cattistock, with "Parson Milne," and the season before they had suffered terribly from the distemper scourge. He, when we started, said to me, "The French are supposed to be good vets, let's ask if they have a cure." This we did, at every large kennel, and always had the same reply: that they had had good results from "téribenthine" used as a subcutaneous injection. This became almost exciting and we determined to find out about it. We had been moving nightly, staying at little inns

The Cavalry School at Saumur

wherever we chanced to be, and at the end of the week, we found ourselves at a very nice place on the side of a river where we could swim, and thereby get the otherwise unprocurable bath, so decided to lay up over Sunday. There being a chemist's shop across the road, we looked in to buy tooth paste or something of the kind, and I took occasion to ask if the chemist had Térébenthine. "Oh, yes, plenty," he said, and produced and handed me a wine bottle full of colourless fluid. I pulled out the cork and smelt. Turpentine!—the mysterious remedy for "La Maladie" was simply turps!

The Loire had come into our route, and consequently Saumur, where the French Cavalry School, Veterinary and Farriery Schools are all combined.

Having a letter to the second in command, we delayed our progress for a couple of nights, and saw the School in detail, a very interesting experience.

At Saumur, our abominable French was to be tried higher than anywhere hitherto. We were invited to dine with the colonel, and I, being the senior, was favoured in being told off to take in the lady of the house. Alas, it turned out that she only spoke her own language; I struggled along somehow, trying to understand her, and to make her understand me. She developed a habit, that I had thought peculiar to the Briton, of shouting louder when not understood, and this went on until her shouts attracted the attention of every one at the table, and made my lame attempts to reply the height of absurdity. They were very kind and I appreciated it, but it was an exhausting evening. My friend, at the other end of the the table, had, I found when comparing notes, been struggling in much the same way as I had, and that we both had endeavoured



Basset cubs

to seek a similar inspiration, in copious draughts of Saumur's champagne, but without effect.

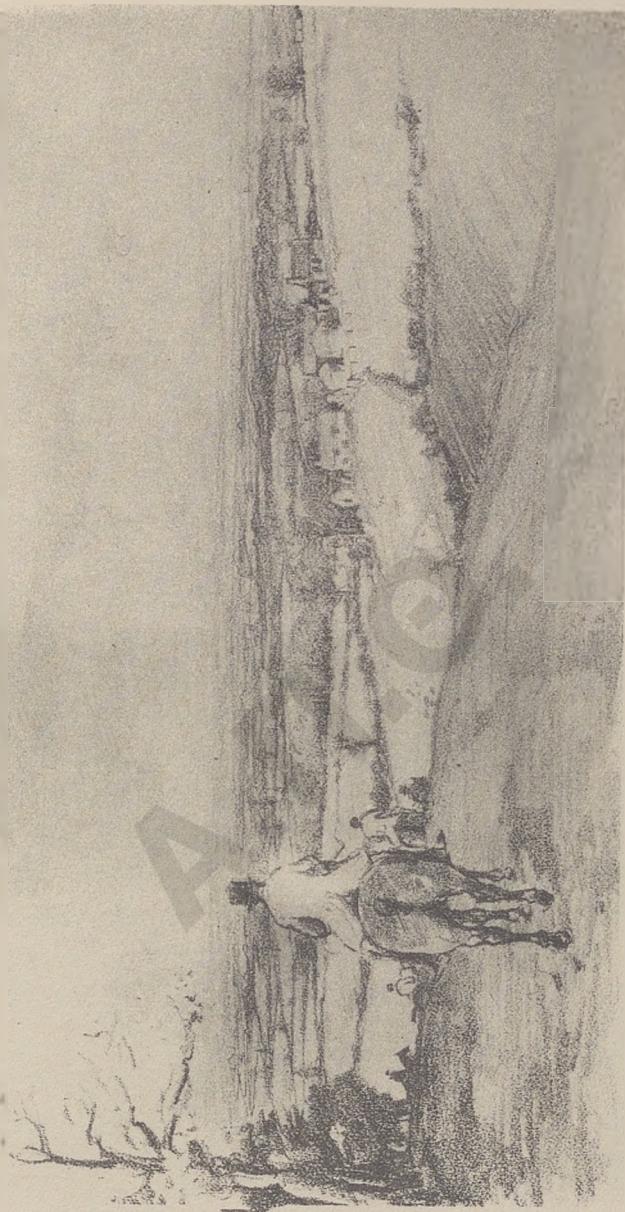
The last large pack we saw were rather remarkable from the fact, which Monsieur Levesque, the Master, told us, that they had been bred from the same stock for fifty years without introduction of any new blood; they derived originally from two hounds, one French and the other a French-English cross. We saw one litter which seemed strong and healthy in spite of this in-breeding. In colour this pack were peculiar, being pure black and white in about equal proportions, with small lemon tan markings about the eyes and on the cheeks but not elsewhere, nor with some of the mixed colour seen here. At another place we took a great fancy to a little pack of straight-legged Bassets, rough hounds of almost Dandie Dinmont colour. Captain Palmer intended to try to get some to bring home, but the War intervened, during which, I am

Home Again

sorry to say, he lost his life, so there is little chance of the introduction here of what I think would be a very popular breed.

It was in 1912 that we had had to leave our little thatched house at Sandridge and migrate to the country of the Vale of White Horse (Cricklade) Hounds, and some incidents of my sporting life there have been given in an earlier chapter. We had an attractive little old house at Purton Stoke with a paddock and large apple orchard which grew many old-fashioned, but very good, apples. These in winter used to announce their presence rather obtrusively to the noses of our visitors through being stored underneath the drawing-room in a cellar, access to which was through a trapdoor in the floor of the room. It afforded us some amusement to see such visitors sniffing round and wondering where the smell came from.

The Vale



CHAPTER XI

The War: Remounts at Swaythling

A FEW rather uneventful years had passed thus. Some hunting with the V.W.H. (Cricklade) Hounds, two point-to-point races, ridden over a natural country, then some autumn sport each year in Scotland, sums it up. Then came rumour of war, and, finally, the actual thing. Almost the first one saw of it had to do with horses. Hurriedly recruited remount buyers rushed everywhere, scores of unwanted horses, many the halt and the lame, congregating at all kinds of rendezvous. Complements had to be made up hurriedly, and some were awful crocks which for years had done nothing more than trundle a light milk-cart to the station. Hunt horses were offered and taken at less than half their value, just to carry on with, until the foreign importation schemes had time to be put to work. I went to the station to see the local Territorial Yeomanry and their horses off. It was terribly exciting, and one felt there was something wrong with being left behind. Being fifty years old, I realized that there was no front-line war glory for me, and at first I carried on, or tried to do so, as best I could, but it was no use. All my friends were going or gone, I had to have some hand in it, however small. I heard that they wanted people to take some of the many horses they were landing from America to condition and put in order for use, so, having a number of open sheds, all facing south, and having had a good deal to do with horses in the open, I hung

Will Ogilvie

“bails” in the sheds, and got some thirty horses at once on applying. I beat up some grooms and young farm-hands, and we soon had the animals coming on as well as possible, considering that they were pretty sick after the voyage and rough usage. We were paid twenty-five shillings per head per week for their keep, and, at the price of fodder then, could do them well on it, labour included. I am sorry to say some unscrupulous people saw a chance of cheap money by turning the poor brutes out by hundreds on winter grass, but that was stopped when the remount officers had time to look round.

Shortly after I had started these stables, Will Ogilvie, the well-known poet, an old friend of mine, turned up, suffering, as I had been, from restlessness. I suggested his helping me, and a better man could not have been found, so he came in and we about doubled the number of horses.

Will, who had broken horses in Australia for a living at one time, was a godsend, as a few of our charges were very rough rides, and those he took on. In our stableyard most mornings there could be seen a very creditable rodeo, W.H.O. trying one or two new arrivals or an old offender; of these we had only, so far as I remember, two which we reported unsafe to issue. They were aged horses which seemed never to have been broken, or if they had, were found bad and had been turned out, perhaps for years I suppose. They were the rough material from which the professional “outlaw” is made in America. By careful handling, Ogilvie rode them successfully, though these two would, we thought, always be liable to a break-out. His experience in Australia led him to distrust black horses, and though I was rather inclined to laugh at the idea, we had several which supported his theory. Ogilvie was very modest



Begging of the street kids. Entering home

A Swaythling Incident

and would not admit that he was really a "buck jump rider," but I only saw him put down once, and curiously enough that was by a raw horse which came to hand quite well eventually.

Beginning with Lindsay Gordon, Australia has the curious distinction of having produced a number of that *rara avis*, the poet-horseman, and Will H. Ogilvie ranks, in my opinion, with the best of them.

Our stable was brought to an end by the director of remounts appointing me to command a squadron in the Remount Depot at Swaythling, which was the depot through which all animals for overseas passed for issue. It consisted of ten squadrons, and was commanded by Colonel Goad who had been connected with the remount service in India.

The breaking of a rein in last year's National (1936) which, in the opinion of most people, deprived Davy Jones of the race, reminds me of a similar, but more complete break, which, far from being regrettable, was a source of considerable congratulation to me in my early time at Swaythling. A few days after I joined up at the depot, I had taken over a squadron for which the stables were hardly completed, so no horses had as yet been issued to me, though the men were there and all else ready. The O.C. of a nearby squadron lent me a pony, an Australian, on which I made a small tour round the depot, just to get an idea of things generally. I was just thinking what a nice ride she was when, on turning homeward, without a moment's warning, she, as they say, "went to market." Her head vanished between her forelegs, and she started to buck like nothing I have ever experienced. I sat a few, but ultimately parted company with such violence that I took a handful of reins with me, all breaking. Pretty well shaken, my only

Swaythling Experiences

comfort was that the reins, being entirely out of commission, absolved me from getting on again. No one ever admitted it, but I have a strong suspicion that some one's distorted sense of humour had prompted the loan of that pony to me, as I never observed any one connected with that squadron riding the animal.

Another time when I was bucked off at Swaythling comes to mind as a rather humiliating experience. I was riding a pony for the first time at the head of a small column of remounts for issue overseas. The lane leading to the parade ground was slippery, and, though I could feel he was ready to play up, my pony was afraid to do it; immediately we entered the gate, however, he "let go" properly, plunging, kicking and bucking all combined, ultimately depositing me on the flat of my back, holding on to the reins. I was dragged all over the place, wondering what amusement the men were getting out of it. Fortunately, when I remounted, I found that there were a few minutes to spare before the C.O. was due, and one end of the ground being newly ploughed, offered the chance to get the pony's back down. I sent him round this as hard as legs could carry him, and appeared just in time to announce my issue at the gate without further trouble.

I consider I was lucky during my two years at Swaythling, as these two falls and a rather bad one through a horse slipping up with me on Southampton Common were the only ones I had, though I rode hundreds of strange horses.

There were many square pegs in round holes at the beginning of the War, and many real good fellows—some, who had come from as far even as New Zealand to "do their bit," and did it, though often in less glorious positions than they had anticipated

Handling Mules in the Remount Depots

when joining. Commanding officers in the front-line did not want subalterns older than themselves, and they were probably right. But it led to much disappointment to keen men.

I was lucky in being employed on work I knew something about, though lacking any knowledge of military matters. The personnel of our remount depot certainly were not so lucky, as my squadron, particularly, was almost entirely composed of coal miners. These, as may be imagined, had had perhaps less opportunity even to see horses than any other class of men in the country. Pit ponies in the darkness of a mine do not afford much opportunity of acquiring horse knowledge. None could ride, but, all credit to them, none refused to try, and a more plucky lot of men could not be found anywhere. Most horses, when they came to Swaythling, had been got pretty quiet; and a large number, being what were called "light draught" from America, were bred at least on one side from Percheron stock, proverbially a quiet breed. The troubles began, however, when mules were sent us. Many of these had never been ridden at all, and did not intend to be. The colonel, a great stickler for correct procedure, insisted that there should be no leading on foot. They had to be ridden to the parade ground and through Southampton to the ships, each man riding one and leading other two. I have gone into the lines on the morning of an issue and watched a gallant pitman being bucked, kicked or thrown off in all kinds of ways, only to pick himself up and, pointing to another mule, say "Fetch oot that un," and going on until he found an animal that would consent to carry him. There were few days that the ambulance did not have to go to Netley Hospital with casualties, sometimes several, but there was never any shortage of riders. I suppose familiarity with

The Swaythling Mess

danger in the life of a coal-pit hardens men's nerves, but my experience of the miner's grit in tackling a situation quite foreign to his training has left me with a great respect for him.

We had some trouble with other men, not miners. Almost any one at the beginning who had had any previous military service was made a non-commissioned officer, especially if he had a waxed moustache and was clean, and those characteristics, though attractive, did not always turn out to be a true index of military efficiency, and there had to be some reductions to the ranks and general adjustments before things went smoothly.

When conscription came in, we did get a few trained horsemen, but also some who had much less experience than the pitmen and were temperamentally far less suited. I remember one pathetic case of a poor little fellow who, when put on a quiet horse, was so terrified that he had to be lifted off. It turned out that he was, in private life, a church organist. Ultimately a more congenial job was found for him in the officers' mess.

That mess was a curious compound of "dug out" officers and masters of hounds, past and present, mostly people who had had to do with horses, but including not a few who had never had much to do with regular work at all; they were a cheerful crowd, however, if somewhat thirsty at times.

An inspecting general one day asked me who rode the chargers in my squadron; and when I said that I did most of it his reply was, "Why don't you make your young subalterns do that?" I had to explain that the united ages of my squadron—three of us—came to 138 years.

One of the best practical jokes I know of was played on that Swaythling Mess and the depot. Though almost in Southampton, the depot ran alongside some big woods, and the night



The Finished Article

The Swaythling Mess

before a big issue overseas some one at dinner said hounds were coming there next day. It might have been the first of April; I do not remember. It seemed curious, so near Southampton, but we forgot about it until, after a very busy morning, when we were riding to the mess at lunch-time, we heard a horn and shortly after a hollo-away. Every one, including myself, galloped off into the woods. The men climbed up on anything affording a view, every one trying to see hounds. By chance, I saw an officer, the late Tommy Timson, cross the end of a ride in the wood with a hunting-horn in his hand, and knew we had been hoaxed; some others had gone much further afield, galloping for dear life towards where they had heard the hollo, but we had all been thoroughly taken in.

A very pleasant interlude to remount work at Swaythling came to me through the kindness of the Dowager Lady Swaythling, who thought I had obliged her by letting some younger members of her family ride exercise with my string of horses. She gave me a general permission to fish a pool at the very foot of the Itchen, where it runs into Southampton Water. This lay in her garden and I do not remember any time when it did not yield at least one or two sea trout to my efforts with a rod. When work was finished at the depot I used to jump on a pony and ride down there, and, tying the animal to a handle of the garden door, I fished until dark.

After a couple of years passed at Swaythling I began to feel restless again; somehow I seemed to be too far from the war. I volunteered several times to take cargoes of animals across to Rouen. There were thrills in that—the departure at night

I Volunteer for Salonika

in black darkness without lights was one—and I was not surprised to hear that the transport captains, after a long spell of continuous crossings, always on the bridge, sometimes got nerves and required a rest. Remount transports were always convoyed by a destroyer going, but took their chance coming back. Orders generally were to return by the first boat leaving; these were usually leave ships bringing over details from all kinds of units. One night I found myself O.C. ship, carrying among others something like two hundred men who were being brought back owing to their having German names. I believe these were drafted into one of the London regiments, where they could be kept under observation or their origin identified.

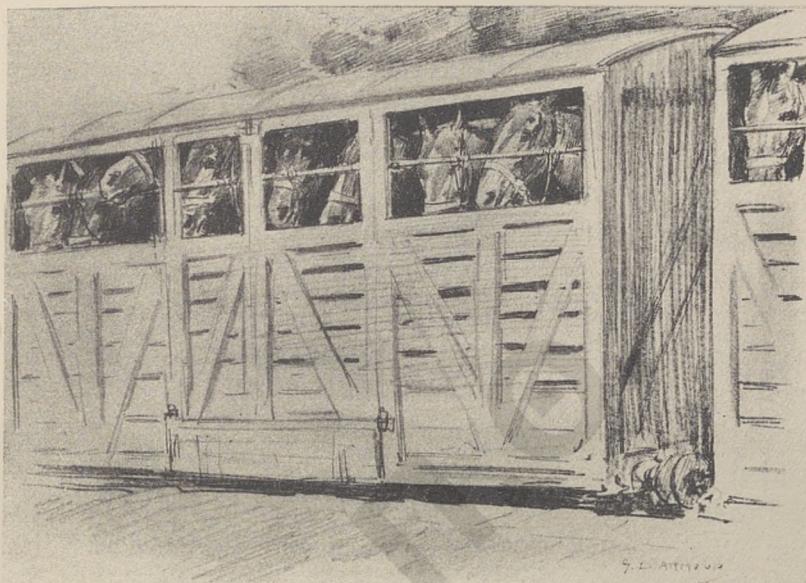
Our adjutant at Swaythling, Major Eustace Blois, had gone to Salonika as D.A.D. Remounts, and to command the depot there, and this suggested a change to me also. I offered to exchange with an officer who had a squadron with the Salonika force, successfully arranged the transfer, and set out. The baggage allowance was a very small one, considering that we had to provide for great heat in summer and almost arctic cold in winter, but I managed to bring mine down low enough to include a hunting-saddle and a gun. Both of these proved of great use, as riding was naturally a daily occupation, and the Vardar Marsh in winter supplied about the finest wildfowl shooting in Europe and its results a very welcome addition to rations.

Ours was the first troop train to go to Taranto *en route* for Salonika, so in France, at least, was an object of a good deal of interest. There were several stops, which included a night's rest for the men at rest camps, which had been established for the

Our Journey East

purpose, and others, for the matter of a few hours, generally outside some station where there was a chance for a wash and general brush-up for all hands.

One of these latter I remember was beside a river, at the time



Loaded

a rushing torrent from melting snow in the mountains. Having got somewhat in arrears in the matter of baths, I dodged under a train of empty trucks and through other obstacles towards the river, only to find that it was very difficult to get any place where it would not be dangerous to bathe. I did, however, come on a tiny bay guarded from the current by rocks, and there I carefully slipped in to find absolutely iced water. It reminded me of a remark some may remember in the *Pink Un* in its palmy days during a period of unusually severe winter weather, that

En route for Salonika

if it lasted longer, it would endanger the continuation of the valuable breed of bronze apes.

It was bracing, anyway, and the bully beef at lunch went better than it had been doing.

We had a severe disappointment at another stopping-place in Italy, I think it was at Turin. We heard we were to stop for an hour or two there, and concluded that the station buffet would certainly give a chance to vary our menu, and it did. Our train being shunted into a siding, I and the occupants of our carriage trotted along to the station with this in prospect, to find it was a "meatless day" there, and that the only available dish was a kind of salad composed of lettuce, beetroot, and chunks of octopus. In principle I have never been averse to trying a new dietary, but in practice octopus defeated me mechanically. My appetite was willing but my teeth were weak. There may be some old art students who will remember a kind of indiarubber, once used in charcoal drawing, which had to be chewed for about half a day before it was ready for use. Well, octopus is like that; mastication softened it a little, but what the other aids to digestion could have done I do not know as I did not swallow it. At another such stop I went along with some of the officers to a little restaurant and lunched. We all had practically the same meal but were charged very much more than some others, and when I remonstrated, the proprietress explained by words and gesture that she charged according to the rank of the officer.

At yet another halt, at a sea-coast place the name of which I never heard, some of the officers were bathing and I had the luck to save the life of one of them. I was swimming seawards and met the young fellow who, unobserved by his friends, was

En route for Salonika

trying to swim back from a sandbank on which the others were disporting themselves. He was at the last gasp, literally, and just about to sink when I got hold of him and took him far enough to find bottom. It was lucky for him that years before



Gallipoli: The Narrows

a friend and I had amused ourselves playing at life-saving, and had evolved a useful method for doing so. There was nothing heroic about it, and other friends on whom I have demonstrated the principle, have said they would rather drown.

We swam a good deal from the Union Castle liner *Saxon*, while waiting at Taranto for the arrival of a second train, but it was a qualified pleasure which I think I should have denied myself had I known, as I afterwards did, that the harbour was entirely landlocked except for a narrow gateway to the sea, and

En route for Salonika

that the drainage of the town was discharged into it. However, where ignorance is bliss, etc., and it did us no harm.

I suppose all professions have their drawbacks, but when on the *Saxon* I heard of a man who seemed to have struck a particularly trying one.

The first officer of the ship told me that when embarking passengers for the previous voyage, a civilian came up the gangway among the soldiers they were carrying, and presented a letter of introduction. It explained that he was the representative of an American film company sent for the purpose of getting a film of a ship which had been torpedoed, and it was requested that he should be afforded all facilities to do this. He stated that he had already done three voyages with this object but had not yet had any "luck."

They took him, but again he turned out a lucky mascot instead of what the Yankees call a "Jonahman." I never heard of so curious a commission, and I only hope he did not lose his job through not "making good."

Our ship was accompanied by two Jap destroyers which made a very efficient guard in that you never knew where they would be for ten minutes on end. They were always changing station, and I should think a submarine would have had great difficulty in attacking had there been any so disposed.

Owing to the activity of submarines in these seas we sailed only at night, anchoring during daylight in various places which had been protected by mines. Among these was the island of Milo, a name familiar to me when an art student as the place where the famous statue, known as the Venus of Milo, was discovered.

CHAPTER XII

Salonika

AT the time of my arrival in Salonika we were, I think, very badly off for planes. Our men went up when the enemy were above us, but, as they generally came over at something like 1,700 feet, and had, I was told, a higher "ceiling" than anything we could send up, no harm was done on either side. Collecting shell-cases, nose-caps, and other used detonators became a hobby. I believe inkstands and other gadgets were made of them. They did not attract me, and, I am glad to say, I did not attract them, as, though small, they weighed several pounds, and, coming from immense heights, a direct hit would have prevented the collector taking any further interest in the war or anything else.

The navy, such of it as chanced to be there, used to take a hand in these little bombardments, and one shell of theirs, a dud fortunately, missed my little cook-house by about two feet, burying itself about a yard in the ground, and it is probably there still. There was a story current that they sometimes fired contact shells. Perhaps the one in question was such; our curiosity was not sufficient to tempt us to dig it up to see.

The first night I spent at Salonika I was taken to see a variety entertainment at a neighbouring camp, at which an item—not on the programme—caused some amusement. In the middle of the performance a 'phone message came: "Three enemy planes sighted heading towards Salonika." The show continued,

The B.S.F.

but, as the audience was more interested in the planes than in the performance, the artistes often had to address themselves to the backs of a good many heads. These planes never came, however, so all was well.

Another night, when the concert chanced to be pretty near the front lines, we ended up by watching a little bombardment of the Bulgar position. I do not know why this was done, but some one suggested that it was in compliment to the performers, a kind of *quid pro quo* on parting, but this seemed to be carrying politeness too far, especially as the Bulgars might have misinterpreted our motive and replied with interest.

When I was just beginning to settle to the new life at Salonika, the O.C., Lt.-Colonel Blois, got leave, and I took over temporary command during his absence. When at home he was taken ill, and, being unable to return, I had the good fortune to get the appointment, under Brigadier-General Dowell, the Director of Remounts. The command of the depot was combined with D.A.D.R., and, there being no A.D.R., it made my appointment equivalent to that in responsibility, though not in pay!

The Director was the best type of old soldier and a splendid man to work under, a fine horseman and judge of everything to do with horses, loyal to every one under him. I consider it the best luck I had, to serve under his command.

It is said that having a nickname is a mark of its recipient being a good fellow, and I do not think that is contradicted in the case of General—now Field-Marshal—Lord Milne, who commanded the B.S.F. “Uncle George,” though not very well treated at the end of the war, has since proved his worth in a way that could not be overlooked, and I think history

The B.S.F.

will show that he carried out well a very difficult proposition with what I have heard called “Cinderella’s Army.” A large proportion of the B.S.F. were always more or less sick from malaria, sick of enforced inaction, sick for want of a spot of leave, but he kept them in heart enough to fight well, when called upon, as they were at the end. He is now Field-Marshal Lord Milne to the world, but still “Uncle George” in private parlance, to his old B.S.F., still “Cinderella’s Army.”

Few people now remember that the end of the war came first to Salonika, when the Bulgar was the first to throw up the sponge, after a severe thrashing with heavy casualties on both sides. Funnily enough, the deputation of officers that came down to sue for peace, first of all paid a compliment to our animals. When seeing mules and horses all fit and well, as they passed through the lines, they said, “If we had your transport we should have been in Athens long ago.”

The Bulgar was a sportsman in his way, as is illustrated by an incident which happened to an independent brigade commanded



A Macedonian Peasant

The B.S.F.

by General Sir Walter Ross—now dead, I regret to say. His brigade was on a comparatively quiet part of the line, his personnel being chiefly B.2 men (i.e. fit for garrison duty). They used a bit of open ground for playing football and such diversions, and the Bulgar, though within easy range of it, never fired a shot during that time. But “Watty” Ross, to use his nickname—again a real term of affection—was always spoiling to fight, and so he decided to use the ground for drill, whereupon the enemy at once bombarded it, afterwards dropping from a plane a message of apology, explaining that they had no objection to games, but this military exercise was altogether another thing.

Once I went up to General Ross’s headquarters to judge at a horse show. Being a Highlander he had managed to get some pipers from another unit—Irish, I think. Also attached to his brigade was a mountain battery; this, I should explain to the uninitiated, consisted of small guns which could be taken to pieces and carried on pack mules, the ammunition being transported in the same way. This battery formed a part of the show, and was waiting its turn to enter the ring, all as smart as “spit and polish” could make it. It had evidently been arranged that, like the haggis in a Highland banquet, it should be “piped in,” and the pipers accordingly took station at the head of the procession. “Tenshun!”—the pipes gave a skirl, and the great drones boomed their notes. But this was too much for the mules, which had never before encountered such a thing; the column broke up as if a shell had burst among them, and, breaking loose from their leaders, the mules bucked and kicked until parts of guns and ammunition were scattered far and wide.

A Word for the Mule

Mules have a bad name, largely undeserved I think, and I can speak from pretty extensive experience, as we always had several thousands in the depot. Our men for the most part were dealing with that composite animal in bulk so did not come into such personal connection with him as an individual, but nearly all who continued to use the same animals got fond of them. Each of my five squadrons drew their own forage by means of G.S. wagons drawn by mules, and, naturally, the drivers found out their wonderful qualities as draught animals and took great pride in them.

There were only two hard roads from Salonika to the front, and many points had to be reached across country away from metalled roads of any kind. In dry weather the ground became very hard, but in wet nothing could be more unsuitable for heavy traffic. During a spell of the latter condition, a big gun got bogged near the remount depot. Double teams of horses failed to extricate it, and an S O S was sent to the nearest squadron. The officer in command of this had made a hobby of using the best mules he had for his transport, all greys, and, sending down six of these in response to the call, they pulled the gun out at once.

That the mule is much more intelligent than the horse will be conceded by any one with experience of both. Unlike the horse, he does not jump into the collar and hurt himself when the object to be moved seems immovable, but goes gently against it, and exerts all his weight and strength in the pull.

After all the discussion pro and con mechanical traction, it is my conviction that in war there will always be points that cannot be reached except by animal transport, and I am sure there is nothing to beat the mule for such purposes. He responds

Handling Mules

to good treatment and feeding, but at a pinch can exist where a horse would die, and work under conditions where he would be useless.

While on the subject of mules I should like to record a few facts, the result of experience, which might be of use to any who may have to deal with similar conditions. When I took over the Salonika depot, the casualty list, almost all from kicking during feeding time, was a pretty heavy one, and, to counteract this, feeding troughs had been multiplied *ad absurdum* in the belief that, being widely scattered, the animals would not kick one another. Nothing could be farther from the fact. We fed from outside the kraals or enclosures, through which ran a road of sorts, and I had observed that the animals, as regularly as a clock, gathered at feeding-time in the corner nearest where the wagon would come. Therefore, in spite of some opposition, I insisted that no grain should be put in a trough until they had



lined up close along it, this being encouraged by two men in the enclosure behind them. There they fed, packed as close together as

they could stand, rendering kicking, except harmlessly behind them, impossible, casualties ceased, and in a few days they realized the benefit themselves, and could not be fed otherwise. Besides reducing accidents, this countered another



A Goal

Handling Mules

difficulty. Mules, like human beings, include greedy ones, bold ones and timid; and when feeding in open order, a bold greedy mule, by backing along a line of troughs and kicking, could reserve half a dozen for his own personal use. This led to sand colic, which killed a steady proportion every day, in spite of the veterinary officers. The victims died in great agony, and no wonder, as I have seen as much as seventy pounds of sand taken out of a dead mule. What was the cause? I put it down partly to indigestion from gorging and partly to lack of bulk in the feed. It may be that, feeling unwell, they took a little sand as a cure, and went on accumulating this with fatal results. I can only surmise this, but I have seen horses, the most fastidious of feeders, eat a bit of turf, earth and all, also a dog eat a small quantity of coal, I suppose for some such reason.

The director agreed with my diagnosis, such as it was, and obtained very promptly, horse-driven chaff-cutters. He also approved the new way of feeding, and the result of these combined measures was to eliminate sand colic.

Salonika and all the lower parts of Macedonia are well known to be malarial, and few people escaped it altogether. I was one of the fortunate ones, and would have escaped hospital entirely but for the well-intended ministrations of a young doctor, who inadvertently mistook cramp in the ribs for pneumonia; this he also inadvertently cured by an injection of morphia, given to relieve the great pain and to make possible the short journey to hospital in an ambulance. With great difficulty I got released after two days, during which I was the joke of the hospital. I have told many doctors of morphia as an infallible cure for cramp in the ribs, but most look suspiciously at me, scenting a drug addict, and none, I think, believe my tale.

Polo in Salonika

My miners, many of whom had been drafted to Salonika, again showed their pluck, and would never "go sick" unless quite knocked over. Among these was a man who acted groom for me during the time I was commandant, a fine fellow who, in civil life, was stud manager in charge of the ponies in a coal pit. I heard a story of him that, when the big bombing raid took place, before I knew him, he was outside the H.Q. hut holding two horses. After it was over, he was found still there, and, when asked why he had not run for shelter, said, "I could not leave the horses." He was a bad malaria case, but would always brave it out rather than go to hospital.

Despite malaria and other incidental drawbacks to the country, Salonika had compensations; we played polo, as did several other units. We, at Remounts, naturally had many horses, and among them could be found occasional cow ponies, and even, now and then, a broken polo pony, so we were pretty well horsed, though we did not retain those that could be useful for issue when wanted. They also played at one of the corps headquarters, and attached to it was an Assistant Provost-Marshal of horsy tendencies. Now, the police were issued horses from the depot and, knowing that their duty consisted of patrolling sections of roads at a walking pace, it was usual to mount them on big quiet horses which, though perhaps touched in the wind or otherwise not quite up to active service standard, might perform such duties well enough. On a visit I paid the corps, they told me they were going to play polo that afternoon, and that the A.P.M. would mount me. He did this well, and had evidently been a great success as stud manager, almost amazingly so, as all the ancient police horses had miraculously changed into rather useful polo ponies. As a guest I





Flighting on the Vardar Marsh

Wild Fowl Shooting on the Vardar Marsh

could hardly even comment on the change, much less criticize it. That A.P.M., when the army went to Constantinople, was put in charge of the military police in the town. I believe his first act was to commandeer a box (official) at the chief music hall and theatre, explaining that it was necessary to the carrying out of his duties. I also saw his men at the tram-way centre teaching the Turk, not too gently, the Western custom of "ladies first" when entering a car. He certainly was an officer of some originality and character, and his men were worthy of him.

Wild-fowl shooting was another compensation. During the winter months countless wild-fowl of every kind, from the little teal to the great black swan, gathered in the great Vardar Marsh. The ducks spent the day on the sea of the bay, and flew in to feed at night; the geese reversed the order of things, so if on a cloudy night one took up a good position it was possible to get a great deal of shooting and some welcome additions to the menu. Contrary to what one would have thought, a clear fine evening was unsuitable, as the ducks came in too late to shoot, and one could hear hundreds passing and alighting on the water without being able to see any.

I dare say all this reads as if we did little else but amuse ourselves, but this was not the case. There was a good deal to do during most days, and our shooting was generally done only in the evenings, when work was over.

I think the record bag was made by an enthusiastic sportsman, attached as veterinary officer, Capt. Mathias, who in one winter had 800 duck and over 80 geese to his credit.

I shall always regret never having been able to organize a beat for wild boar, of which there were a considerable number

Jackal Hunting with the B.S.F.

in the Vardar Marsh. I saw them on several occasions but only once within shot, when my gun was loaded for snipe. A few pheasants also lived in the marsh, and to do so must have entirely changed the habits with which they are credited. How they survived I do not know, as there was nothing in the form of a tree on which they could roost and jackals swarmed everywhere.

Apropos of these animals, one afternoon there arrived at my squadron a veterinary surgeon named Glass, in peace time well known in the Quorn country. Hot, thirsty and very excited, he said that he had run a fox to a standstill, that his pony was cooked, and could we lend him a horse to finish the run on. This was done, and a couple of us accompanied him to the place he said he had left it. Sure enough, when we beat out some bushes, up jumped, not a fox, but a fine jackal, which Glass, after a further short burst, knocked on the head with a polo stick. There were wolves in the marsh too, and though I never saw one I heard them and tracked one a long way on one occasion in the mud. His footprints were as large as my fist, and he was evidently carrying his kill as there were drops of blood along the track.

Later on, some of my officers did a good deal of jackal hunting, waiting quietly on the edge of the marsh in the evening until the jacks emerged *en route* for the outskirts of Salonika and a possible supper. I went only once, with a Scots officer, my adjutant, temporary Major Sandy Fasson, and we certainly had a good run, but no "mask to add to the tally," as our hunting correspondents put it. We had two in front of us, and ran one to bay. I bore the animal no ill-will, and was unarmed, but my friend emptied an automatic pistol at it without doing



TURKISH QUARTER, SALONICA GREECE. WHERE THE FIRE BEGAN

Winter in Salonika

any harm, then managed to let his horse loose, giving me a gallop of several miles before I could catch him. Some good shooting was got at white-fronted geese on the young corn-fields in early spring.

Winter was very severe in Salonika, a great contrast to 106 in the shade in summer. Blizzards used to come from the mountains and would rage for several days in succession, and the wind was almost strong enough to lift one off a horse. Some kind of fur covering was the only thing to keep it from piercing one's clothes, so I one day bought in the town a fur coat, not new, which was entirely made of small pieces of the light undercolour of wolf skin. It kept me warm, but had to be remembered when going near horses or mules, which for some reason were terrified of it. I first discovered this when I had a good ten minutes' fight to get on to an American cob I often rode when going to the marsh to shoot in the evening. I had not much difficulty in remounting in the dark to return, but forgetting about it when I reached the mess hut I dropped off over her near shoulder as usual, landing just by her head, whereupon she threw herself over backwards like a flash, fortunately without damage to my saddle.

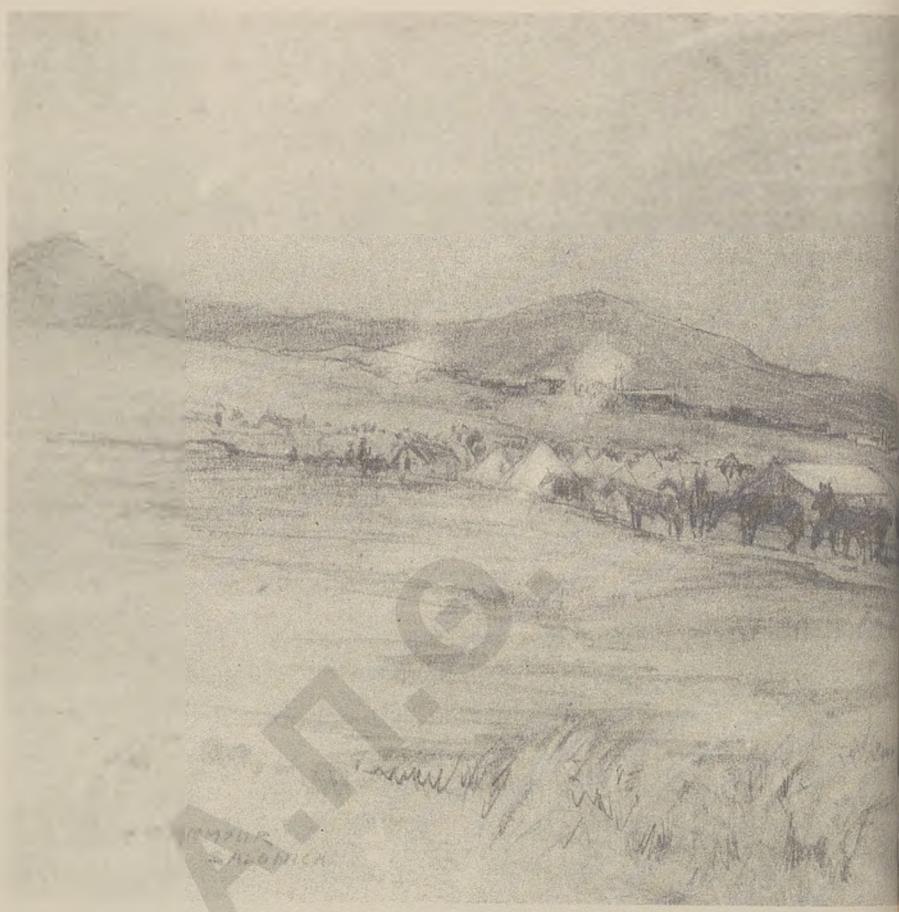
When sending animals up the line—about thirty miles—they were supposed to stop a night at a rest-camp half-way; and during one of the blizzards when it was snowing and blowing hard, those in charge never saw the rest-camp, went straight on and did the whole journey in one day. They were quite hospitably received by the officer in charge there, but it took the O.C. of the rest-camp the best part of a month to wrestle with the dislocation of routine caused by the disparity in the amount of rations consumed. There was red tape

The Great Fire of Salonika

eating its head off, isolated a thousand feet up among the Balkan Hills.

During the time I was at Salonika the great fire took place, which almost entirely destroyed the town. A tragedy to the inhabitants, it was a wonderful sight, and although it was suggested that it was fired by enemy agents, I do not think there was any actual evidence bearing out that belief. From the remount camp we saw the beginning; a "Vardar wind" was blowing gale force from the mountains north-west of Salonika. The fire began in the windward corner of the town, which was composed mostly of old Turkish houses of wood. These naturally made ideal kindling, and with such a wind behind them they went up like a bundle of match-boxes. If it was fired, no better time and place could have been chosen, with the wind blowing from it straight towards the centre of the town; but again, it was the likely place for an accidental fire to start. We had almost a bird's-eye view from the beginning, and it was my belief that the fire might have been checked. If a belt of houses had been blown down to isolate the district most of the town could have been saved, but there were no fire-fighting appliances and, as so often happens in the East, it seemed to be no one's business, so it burnt on until the wind changed.

None of us went into the town in the early part of that day; we were standing by, in the belief that our transport might be called upon to help in salvage work. No order came, however, so several of us rode in after dark. It was a sad sight, every empty space round the outskirts was occupied by thousands of homeless families, mostly sitting on what they had managed to



The Destruction of Salomik



by Fire in 1917

The Great Fire of Salonika

save of their belongings, weeping and wailing, or sunk in dismal stupor. In the streets where it was still possible to enter, men were staggering along, laden with household goods of various kinds. I think I saw something like a score of cases where an exceedingly ugly German mirror was the treasure evidently most valued. Often this hideous object was bigger than the man who was carrying it, but still he staggered on like an ant with an egg. The only wheeled transport I saw were one or two wagons pulled by water buffaloes, the slowest transport animal I know. But they had the merit of taking not the slightest notice of the fire, plodding along at their usual two miles an hour pace and not even looking up when one side of the street was blazing. Next day I came on the charred remains of one of these wagons—I don't know what happened to the team. One wonders whether they had got burnt without noticing it or whether, for once, they had condescended to hurry.

One street into which I went had in it several small minarets, probably attached to what had been some kind of little mosque of the Turkish days, and it was curious to see them take fire as the heat increased. They lit at the extreme top, just like candles, and burnt down until all the timber portion was consumed, and then went out as candles do. I saw, at a later time, the main stems of the minarets still standing after all the rest had cooled, looking like extinguished candles. A remarkable thing was that most of the churches suffered little or no damage, though at least two I knew were well within the fire zone; it really suggested a special dispensation, but was no doubt helped by their being somewhat detached and isolated from the houses. This was very fortunate, as those I knew were both very beautiful

The Great Fire of Salonika

and would have been artistically a great loss, which could not be said of the bulk of the town buildings.

Shortly after the Salonika fire, we heard that some one had arrived from England to plan its rebuilding. I do not know on whose authority this was commissioned, carried out, or to be paid for, but from what I knew of Salonika before the fire, I think they all deserved a decoration as the champion optimists of their time. Knowing the kind of people the inhabitants were, all nationalities and several religions—or no nationality and no religion—and certainly no money, I cannot imagine a more hopeless task than to try to hunt such a pack together, unless after their natural game, the drachma, for which, as the saying goes, they would hunt through hell and back again.

One summer we had a water scare, when it looked as if our supply might run short—a very serious matter, as the nearest river suitable for the purpose was a good ten or twelve miles distant. Fortunately the officer in charge of the water scheme was a very intelligent civil engineer, and he put all the units supplied on a time schedule. This caused some grumbling, but it worked quite satisfactorily and saved the situation.

CHAPTER XIII

Farewell to the East

AS the year 1918 went on rumours of an armistice grew, and one night some of our near neighbours went so far as to celebrate it by firing Verey lights and giving other signs of joy; but it was premature, and I fancy some of the demonstrators got rapped on the knuckles over it. We were more pessimistic, and required definite assurance. Our only contact with the outside world was a single-page newspaper called *The Balkan News*; it was composed of such exceedingly inadequate material as skeleton wireless dispatches, and padded out with facetious nonsense, the best I remember was a very clever parody of "Hiawatha" called the "Song of Tired Arthur," describing the life of a junior officer. At last the armistice did come, but not from home. It began with overtures from our own immediate enemy, the Bulgar, and quickly spread to the whole war front.

Our work, however, was not ended; quite the reverse. Information came that the Salonika army, or such of it as was required, was to be transferred to Constantinople, and to become the Army of the Black Sea. This meant considerable reduction of everything in proportion, remounts included; and soon orders were given to begin selling surplus horses and mules. Just then the Director of Remounts had gone home on leave, and I was in charge. A very welcome order came that I was to go to Constantinople to receive instructions, and I

The Passage of the Dardanelles

spent the best part of a week there, prospecting for a place to plant a small depot. I found it at a country residence which had belonged to an old Turk; Mashlak was its name, and a very charming place it was. I had been offered the command there,



Kilid Bahr at the Narrows, Gallipoli

but I had been two years from home, where I had left my wife and two boys growing up, so it was impossible to accept the appointment, which otherwise I should have welcomed.

The passage through the Dardanelles, which I made twice, was particularly interesting. We could see many of the entrenchments, both our own and those of the Turkish defenders; and the old ship *Clyde*, which was run ashore to help the landing, was still there. I made a few slight sketches as we went past; some I gave to John Masefield, now Poet Laureate, who has written perhaps the best story of the expedition.

Looking at it from the sea it appeared a wonder that any one could have landed alive, with the fire of well-prepared

The Passage of the Dardanelles



positions concentrated upon them; but, as we know, they did. Anzac was only visible in the distance, but seemed to be high banks almost amounting to cliffs.

On my first visit, I got to Constantinople about eight o'clock on a January morning. A mist covered the sea and shore, leaving only the towers and minarets showing. These were gilded by the rising sun, which also tinted the top of the mist with rainbow colours—the nearest thing to fairyland that I have ever seen, a mystery from which anything might have come. Gradually the mist lifted, and the mystery too; fairy castles no longer hung in the sky, but the fine outline of St. Sofia and the big mosques were revealed on solid ground. The Golden Horn appeared with shipping anchored in it; Pera, the modern town, on the right; and old Istambul on the left shore. In both were bare ruined patches, evidence of the numerous fires that have always taken place there, but in the sunlight all was beautiful. A big British battleship was occupying the chief berth alongside the quay, and we found a place to tie up near her. On landing, the first thing that struck one was the awful noise made by the very moderate amount of traffic. We found that this was due to huge motor lorries working on solid iron tyres running on stone-set streets, owing to the scarcity of rubber. Relief was not so far to seek, however, as a street composed entirely of wide steps led straight uphill to the centre of the town; this, of course,



The Constantinople street seller who throws the dice for what the customer will get

Disposal of Animals after the War

was only for foot passengers, but it was generally used by all.

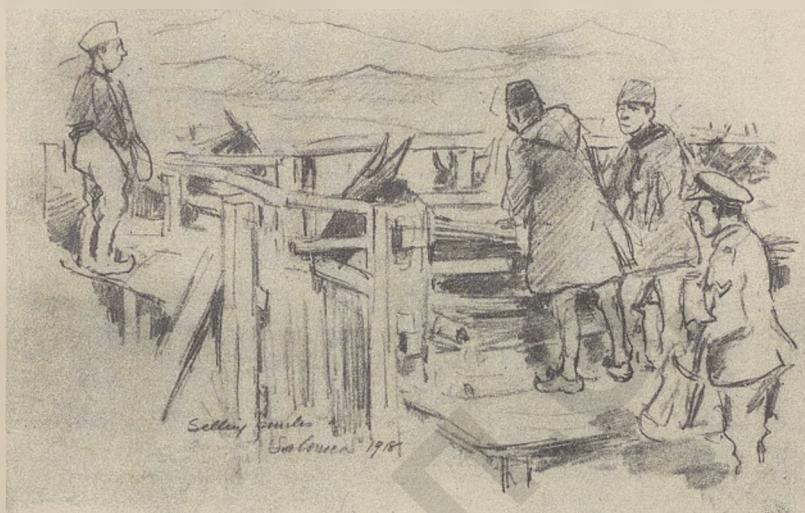
Not far from the head of that stairway-street was a house which had, during the War, been used by the German officers as a club; this had been taken over by the British, together with an exceedingly good cellar of wine of the Fatherland. By good luck I knew the officer in charge, who managed to get me a room there during my stay, and very good quarters they turned out to be, the cellar having, so to speak, fallen like manna from heaven, in other words, for nothing. This benefit was handed on to the new sojourners, and it seemed almost a duty to drink fine Hock and Moselle at about half a dollar a bottle, so any deficiency in the way of food could be made up for very satisfactorily.

Back to Salonika, we began arranging for the disposal of our surplus animals. The sale was advertised all over Greece, in a rather curious way, notices being read out in all the churches. Arrangements were made for interpreters: one for my H.Q. office, and one for each of the five squadrons; the O.C.s squadrons were each to sell on their own initiative, confirmed at my office, where papers were signed. The purchaser had then to go to the Paymaster-General's office, pay his money, and get a receipt, on showing which we gave him a delivery note. Considering the danger of robbery there was in an open camp, I was quite determined that we should handle no money of any kind, and as we ultimately sold over twenty-five thousand mules and horses for a sum of nominally about a million pounds, I was glad this was so decided.

The largest block of animals was bought by the Greek Government, whose representatives came to the depot and were

Disposal of Animals after the War

inclined to bargain and to pick out which animals they would take, also to haggle over the price. As the number in question was ten thousand animals it was impossible to do business like that. We had stated a price, but they still held off, when by



providence a somewhat similar deputation arrived from Roumania, consisting of a general officer and his staff, all in the smart not to say gaudy uniform of the Roumanian army. That of the general was particularly gay, and included scarlet breeches and much gold lace. The lace or the scarlet breeches must have struck the Greeks as meaning business, for on seeing their arrival they promptly ran into my office and signed the agreement for ten thousand animals, at our price and of our selection.

Some of the lesser purchasers who came from all parts of the

Disposal of Animals after the War



country were of interesting and varied types. Many of the hillmen were clothed in a heap of variously coloured coats, showing several pairs of sleeves hanging down, the fashion evidently being to wear the arms through those of one inside coat or more according to the climatic conditions. Some of these coats, made of a homespun wool, were thick enough to stand alone if set on the ground. One or two purchasers from Crete wore what looked like a kind of uniform, by no means unpicturesque; they were of a good-looking fair type, much

superior to the Macedonians. A rather interesting thing was the fact that all these people trusted implicitly to our honesty. To prevent any subsequent trouble, we had a printed form, which had to be signed by purchasers, the wording of which freed us from any responsibility or warranty as regarded soundness or other qualities of the animals. Our interpreter explained what



One of our Signers

this was, but I never saw a single man ask to have it translated in detail or question it in any way before signing.

This signing raised a problem, as the majority of the countrymen could neither read or write, but I got over it by having a pad, wet with copying ink, provided; on this they put their thumbs, then their impress on the document, their names being written below. I wish I had a copy of that book; in the matter of names I think it would be unique. I had an interesting talk with one of these Greeks, who spoke good English and told

Hounds at Salonika

me how, from the various terminations to names, it was possible to know from what part of the country a man came.

Evidently none of the purchasers in these sales had ever had a commercial transaction with an official without baksheesh coming into it. A Greek cavalry officer, whom I will call Blancopulos, had bought himself two horses and, when leaving my office, said, "Messieurs, j'aurai un bien grand plaisir de vous envoyer demain un objet d'art," and, on our explaining that it was impossible for us to accept anything, he replied, "Mais je ne l'enverrai pas du Colonel Blancopulos au Colonel Armour et au Capitain Smithers, mais de *Monsieur* Blancopulos pour *Monsieur* Armour et *Monsieur* Smithers." Dropping the rank of giver and recipient removed for him any objection to such a proceeding.

It was a very distasteful thing to have to sell these animals into the slavery which would inevitably be their fate, but there was no alternative. Orders were issued and carried out that all over sixteen years of age should be destroyed, a well-intentioned thought though hardly logical, as the younger the animal the longer would be his time of suffering. The heavy draught horses were unsaleable, as what one of them required in the way of food would have consumed all there was to keep the other animals on a farm alive.

Shortly before the armistice we at the remount depot had a pleasant reminder of home in the shape of a little pack of hounds that some sportsmen had, in the first place, imported to the Western front, and afterwards, owing I was told to objections by the French, had sent out to Salonika. These, in the preparation for the last and final fighting, were sent down to us to take care of; they were in charge of a man I had known as whip to



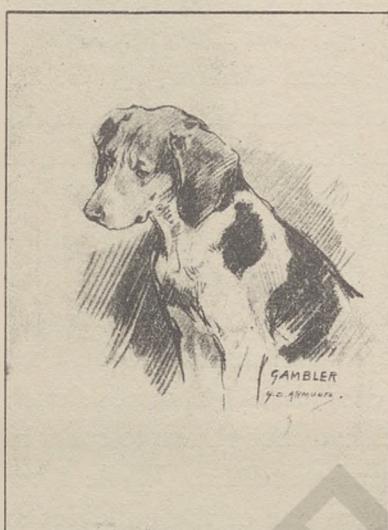
A Normal Day with the Mashlak Hunt, Constantinople, 1919
From a drawing by Major C. Rickards

The Mashlak Hunt

the V.W.H. (Cricklade) hounds, where I had last hunted, so it all felt like a little bit of home. They were a rather curiously assorted lot, a mixture of foxhounds, beagles and harriers, a few being six-months puppies bred on the Macedonian front. We took them out a few times and hunted the native hares, which were identical with our home variety. Our Director, General Dowell, acted as huntsman, and General Onslow, the G.O.C. Artillery, sometimes came out. I often think these little hounds must hold a record in that they hunted behind the lines in France, possibly Belgium, then Macedonia, and went finally with the Army of the Black Sea to Constantinople. What became of them after that I know not, but I hope they fared better than some others I encountered the first time I went to Constantinople. When examining Mashlak, afterwards the remount depot, I was amazed to see several old and very dilapidated foxhounds slouching about the yard, not one of which had enough hair to cover his poor skin, through mange and semi-starvation. While I was looking at them, there emerged from one of the buildings an Englishman in little better condition. His name turned out to be Maiden, a name well known among hunt servants in England. I only saw him once, so I could not get the full story, but it seems he had been engaged by a Turkish grandee, I think Enver Pasha, and that he, or the Turk, had imported some English hounds for which Maiden had acted huntsman until the War caused the Turk to give them up. All the provision the Master made was to present the hounds to Maiden, along with a horse. John Jorrocks, on receiving a somewhat similar present, said: "Confound all presents wot eats!" but Maiden must have said something much stronger, for I can hardly imagine a worse situation than being stranded in Turkey—an enemy country—with

The Mashlak Hunt

nothing but a horse and a pack of hounds. Somehow Maiden had kept the hounds, or at least some of them, alive; whether they together had eaten the horse or only the price of it I cannot say, but it was gone by the time I arrived, and the rest were barely



MUSO STNUSA VALLEY HOUNDS.

alive. When the army arrived from Salonika along with the little pack I have referred to, this poor remnant were added to the strength, with Maiden as huntsman, and then they hunted about the most awful bit of country in which such a thing was ever tried. I have been fortunate enough to secure an illustration (*see page 297*) of this hunting done by an eye-witness, Major C. Rickards, which certainly seems to do the country full justice and demonstrates the difference between it and Melton very forcibly. Maiden himself may quite possibly be still alive, and I think he merited a peaceful old age, if any sportsman ever did.

Much of what I have been telling is no doubt very trivial

Some of our Sportsmen



"GOOSE
& TIM."

when one considers it as a part of the greatest war in history, but it is inevitable that four years spent in an entirely different atmosphere, and in an occupation far from one's own should bulk largely in one's life and memory and lead to recalling the trifling incidents of which that life consisted. I remember with pleasure many of the men I met during those days, and I only

regret that in the case of some, after the end of the War, I lost sight of them.

I was reminded only the other day of a little band of sportsmen, unique in their way, by meeting one of them for the first time since the war. They were Colonel Campbell, commanding the Ordnance Depot at Salonika, and his small staff, Finch and

Captain Mathias, M.R.C.V.S.

Brown. They were a brilliantly clever combination—Campbell, a professional soldier, expert in all pertaining to his branch; Finch, a lecturer at Cambridge, I think, in private life, and now a Professor at London University, took a distinguished part in General Bruce's first Mount Everest expedition; and Brown, doctor of science, an inventor of many things. Bringing up the tail of the team were Captain Mathias, M.R.C.V.S., the Welsh enthusiast in shooting, lately High Sheriff of Pembrokeshire, known affectionately at Salonika as "The Goose," not from any mental similarity to that bird, but from his passion for shooting them.

I am glad to be able to say that he is still going strong and is as keen as ever; I was staying with him recently at his home in Pembrokeshire and made the sketch which is here reproduced. Although he has shot big game in Africa and elsewhere he is far from despising the sport afforded by the snipe, duck and woodcock of Wales, and I am sure he would take as much trouble to circumvent a flock of teal there as for the biggest buffalo "what ever was seen in Africa." And, if you chanced to be with him, he would insist on your taking the first shot in either case. If the "Goose" is not a sportsman in the best sense of the term, then no one ever deserved the title.

Lastly came my humble self who, in spite of their science, was allowed to associate with the band. What sport we had tramping the ice and water of the Vardar Marsh in the winter dusk, and on pleasant evenings fighting it over again beside their hospitable fire after satisfying the cravings of nature with the toothsome result of our labours. There are worse things to eat than a Michaelmas gosling plucked out of the sky with a number four cartridge, and not many better places of shelter



MOUNT ATHOS
12/4/19

when a blizzard was howling outside than that ordnance mess hut and the interesting company which inhabited it. If any out-of-the-way problem presented itself, from loading a special armour-piercing shell to making soap, ordnance could solve it in quick time.

I remember an occasion when such a call was made upon them which was only prevented by time from having what might have been an important result. The two German warships, the *Goeben* and *Breslau*, broke out of Constantinople and one, I forget which, ran ashore. Though attacked by our planes their bombs proved very ineffective on the armoured deck and a call was sent to our experts at Salonika for help.

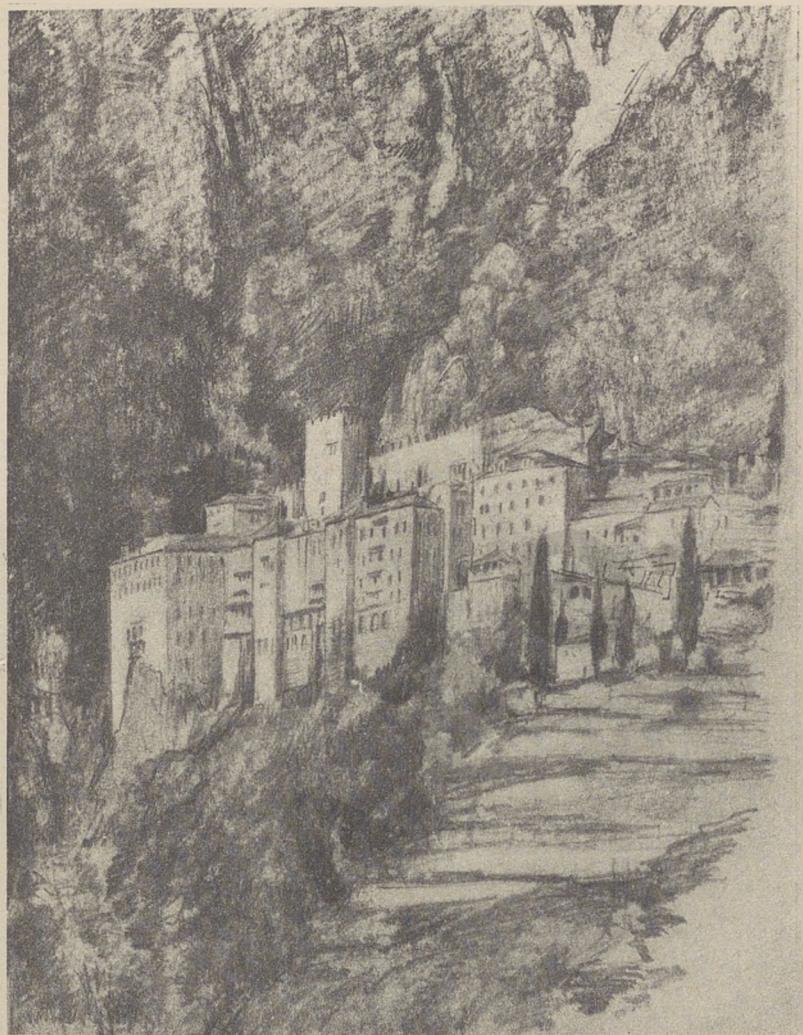
Something in the nature of an armour-piercing shell designed for dropping from a plane was the solution, and this was

A Visit to Mount Athos

dispatched by a fast destroyer, but it only arrived after the ship had been got off.

Another problem set them was solved successfully. There was a brilliant German airman who specialized in destroying our observation balloons. His method was to dive out of a cloud, fire a stream of bullets into them and then to zoom up into invisibility again. Our people decoyed him with a balloon loaded with high explosives and a dummy figure. When he dived at it it was electrically fired, and so ended his activities. Satisfaction was tempered by regret that such an unsporting device had been used, and when I chanced to be at the scene the day after, there was a distinct feeling of depression; no one liked to speak of it although the victim had caused the death of several of our people, alongside whom, incidentally, he was buried.

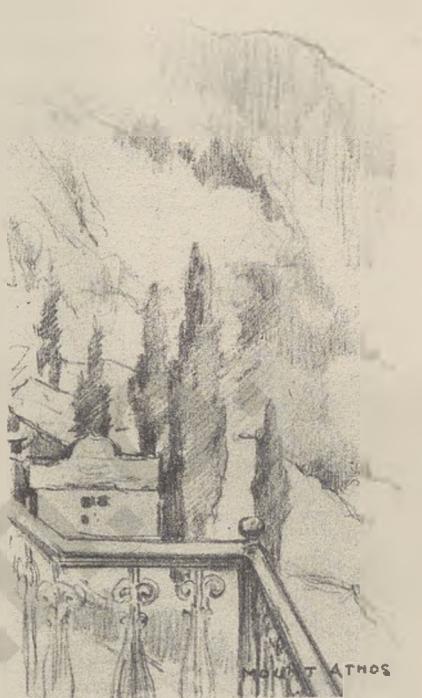
After the armistice and the conclusion of our sales, when time permitted and work slackened, some of our remount officers made a trip to Athens. I was not free to go then, but had the chance instead to visit Mount Athos shortly after. A Greek torpedo-boat was going there to search for some floating mines reported to have been seen, and the commander, whom I knew, most kindly offered to take me. It was a delightful trip; we, along with an interpreter lad I had at the depot, were landed at one of the monasteries, of which there are twelve on the peninsula. Met by one of the monks, we were taken up a winding path to the monastery, which seemed to hang on the precipitous side of almost vertical cliffs. There we were bountifully fed, given the local wine to drink and supplied with comfortable beds, where we slept well until early morning. On getting up next morning I went out on to a balcony that was before my window. It looked as if it was built of wood about the size



*Monastery of St. Paul, Mount Athos, 1919.
Originally built 10th Cent., Rebuilt 14th Cent.*

Riding to Karyes

used for making sheep hurdles at home, and to find I was looking sheer down several hundred feet was rather a shock. If the truth must be told I very gently stepped back into the room and contented myself with the magnificent view of the turquoise blue sea from a more permanent foundation. Delightful coffee and rolls laid a good foundation for the day, and we started on a journey to Karyes, the small town where what I suppose may be called the municipal administration of the peninsula was carried on, and to which each monastery sent a representative. Our hospitable hosts supplied us with transport in the shape of little mules, with pack saddles covered by a rug, to ride upon. The paths wound in and out among rocky precipices. A rather alarming characteristic of this mode of travelling was that the mules insisted on keeping to the very outside stones of the path, over the edge of which one saw far beneath wooded ravines into which one false step would have precipitated us. I could not understand this habit until we met a train of mules, laden with timber, coming the other way. Dismounting, we allowed them to pass outside us, and the secret was revealed: had the timber even touched the inside wall it was almost



MOUNT ATHOS

Luncheon at Mount Athos

inevitable that the mule carrying it would have gone over the side and been certainly killed. A delightful ride, when one had got over the first shock of having a solid rock on one side and a sheer drop on the other, brought us in sight of the little town. Evidently, word of our coming had been sent on, as we noticed a look-out hurriedly run into the town, and heard bells begin to chime. We found a small party of monks waiting to receive us, and I, being senior officer of the party, had to inspect the guard which had been turned out in our honour and which consisted of an officer and eight well-appointed Greek policemen. This ceremony over, we were conducted indoors, to the inevitable Turkish coffee, accompanied by a liqueur made by

the monks and brought by a servant dressed in the white kilt of the mountainers. A general conversation, carried on through my interpreter, passed the time till lunch was announced. This very good meal we washed down with a pretty



liberal allowance of the wine of the country, followed by some of what they described as the champagne of Mount Athos, a strong and very pleasant white wine. A monk then made a speech of



On the road to Mount Athos

M. Atkinson
July 21st 1849

Luncheon at Mount Athos

welcome, in which he laid great stress on their wish for a close friendship with the British. This was rather interesting and was, I think, a quite genuine expression of their hopes, though I am afraid they much overestimated the importance of us their



visitors. Unfortunately it fell to my lot to make reply to this a very inadequate one, I fear, in spite of the inspiration from the champagne of the Mount, and my only hope was that what it lacked might be blamed on the interpreter—a cowardly thought, I admit, as without the pauses required for his translation, I do not think I could have thought of anything at all to say!

An afternoon ride brought us, still warmed by the liquid hospitality of Karyes, to another monastery where we were to stay the night. This was farther inland and was a rambling building of great antiquity in a very picturesque setting. The evening passed much as the previous one had, with supper in

Treasures of the Monasteries

the company of a few monks, one of whom spoke some French. Among many most interesting things, such as holy relics, often beautifully mounted in gold and silver, they showed us priceless illuminated manuscripts of great antiquity: some of these were of secular subjects. *History of the King of India*, profusely illustrated, was the title of one I remember. It dated, I think, from the tenth century, and I should think was pure fiction judging by the pictures. We saw three monasteries each of which had a church or chapel, the walls of which were almost entirely covered with ikons, that is, pictures of sacred subjects. None of these, so far as I could judge, were great works of art, and if they had been they would have been spoiled by the practice of the devout, throughout the ages, of adorning the various figures in diverse ways. The Virgin Mary, for instance, would have a real gold halo fitted to her head or a girdle or necklace of the same metal. Had it been sculpture it might not have mattered, but real solid metal in high relief did not fit into an oil painting however fine the work lavished on it. At Karyes we saw an elaborate wood-carving depicting bible scenes which was said to have taken two monks ten years to complete. It was modern and, I believe, for sale at a high price. My purchases consisted of a few wooden spoons, value a shilling or two, carved by lay brothers of whom there were many. They, I think, performed the manual labour of the Mount but were sometimes, I understand, promoted to be monks.

Next morning, early coffee and a long ride back to the torpedo-boat concluded the trip. We had lovely weather, with the exception of one thunderstorm which, incidentally, supplied a touch of humour to the proceedings, the British naval officer being the victim who suffered from the general hilarity. Having

Return from Mount Athos

come without any protection against rain, and being in the khaki worn by the R.N. when ashore in these parts, he took shelter under, instead of on top of the rug covering the pack saddle. The said carpet, probably made in Germany and coloured with aniline dyes of inferior quality, got wet through and transferred its various hues to his tunic, which, when the storm was over, looked like Joseph's coat of many colours. A quick run home in the torpedo-boat landed us at Salonika again, delighted with the trip. A curious part of this excursion was that, from beginning to end, it had not cost us a farthing; all was given freely and for nothing.

I dare say it is well known that nothing of the feminine gender is allowed on Mount Athos, even the domestic hen being barred. We ate eggs imported from outside, and the only fowl I saw was one old cock, looking very depressed and miserable without his harem. Control, of course, cannot be exercised over wild birds and animals, but is, most rigidly, as regards all domestic stock. Each of us, including the interpreter, before leaving was presented with a book, illustrated by photographs of all the twelve monasteries and inscribed with our names. The interpreter lad I had taken seemed to regard this as almost holy and himself like the Hajji of the Mohammedans who had made the pilgrimage to Mecca.



The Senior Monk

Meeting the King of Greece

I had the honour of meeting the young King of Greece, who had succeeded his father King Constantine, deposed by the revolution under Venezelos. He died not so long after, it will be remembered, from the bite of a tame monkey. He was enthusiastic over everything to do with horses, and came to the remount depot more than once. He was anxious to see a game of polo, and, as we were playing regularly at the time, we arranged a game for him. I dare say the standard of play was not very high, but it seemed to please him. There were also some Roumanian officers present, and I remember they expressed surprise at the age at which some of us were engaging in such a rough game, referring I suppose to the general and myself. On another occasion the King visited us for the purpose of seeing a horse which he wished to have for the lady it was understood he was to marry when his life was so unfortunately cut short. I rode the horse for him and she had it. He spoke perfect English, and was a big, fair-haired, good-looking man, who left a very pleasant impression, if one may say so of a King without *lèse majesté*.

When the armistice came we fortunately had a large number of Turkish prisoners helping in the work of the depot. We had had some Bulgars before that, but they were unsatisfactory, and being too near home were apt to escape. The Turks were much better, and really were fine fellows, who seemed as happy as sandboys; they were well fed, chiefly on horse-flesh, so far as the meat ration went, and allowed the international regulation pay of sixpence per day. This, being paid regularly, must have been a novel experience for a Turkish soldier. Having these prisoners enabled our demobilization to begin promptly and progress rapidly. There was some trouble elsewhere over

Visit to Constantinople

demobilization being delayed, so this was a godsend to us, as many of our men had been abroad without leave for over four years, and some of them I knew had domestic troubles of all kinds in their homes during that time.

At all times there was, of course, the equivalent of what the Navy calls a "sea-lawyer," who always had a grievance, but we had good men on the whole and very little crime. The trouble-makers generally were the same men, and many and curious were the sources of evidence they used to bring in regard to grievances, Mr. Horatio Bottomley's *John Bull* being a favourite among them.

There was, in Salonika, a terrible drink, if raw potato or wood spirit can be so called, sold under the name of "Koniac." If the unwary soldier took it for what its name was intended to suggest he would be found drunk or dead, according to conditions and the quantity taken. This made me inclined to be as lenient as possible with the cases which followed a night out. It may have been bad soldiering, but I cannot help feeling that it was common sense.

Salonika Remount Camp was at last cleared up, leaving half a squadron to go on to Constantinople. The Director had to go to Constantinople to see that all was right there, and thence home, and he suggested that I also might like to go back that way. It was a disappointing visit, however, little having been done towards providing for the half-squadron which was due to arrive. The Director approved of the site, and there was no reason for my remaining longer, so the end of my war seemed to be in sight. Some trouble locally with the Turks had put Istanbul out of bounds temporarily, and prevented me from seeing more of it, as I had hoped to, so I was glad to go. I

Returning Home

joined a small ship going to Malta, which had been what they called a "hush hush" boat, that is an apparently harmless vessel in whose deck-houses were concealed two four-inch guns; a camouflaged trap for submarines in fact. She was carrying some other officers *en route* for home. A quite uneventful voyage, with a call at Lemnos, and a sight of the extreme south-end of Greece, ended at Malta. There we found the streets crowded with rioters, and the authorities without any reliable force to control them. I never understood what the real grievance was, something about the price of bread, I heard, but I saw a private house sacked and its furniture thrown into the street and burned, also a newspaper office. A naval officer was attacked and only escaped with difficulty into the club, one Maltese was killed and a few others were hurt. A few days later some armed bluejackets were landed, and although they only marched through the town singing, it quieted things down a bit. In about a week we were taken aboard a P. & O. ship, which had been signalled to call for the purpose, and landed at Marseilles. Paris, Calais, Dover and London, and my war was done; June 1919 saw me in London, with my life as an artist to begin again.



Gallipoli

CHAPTER XIV

Taking up the Threads

To begin again was not so easy as might be supposed, the War had been a severe financial loss to me; more than four years on Army pay, dating from the age of fifty, when I should have been thinking of what they call, "laying by for a rainy day," and a complete change of occupation at that age made something like an irruption in my life. Every one who has experienced such a thing, and there must have been many, will realize how the mental change, even more than the obvious material difference, makes the old outlook difficult to restore. I dare say this is more so in the case of an artist, or any one engaged in creative work, than in that of the routine worker. Suddenly he has been called from dealing with the appearances of things to the actuality itself, then at the end of four years has to change back to the old attitude of mind. I had done a certain number of drawings during the War, and on my going abroad *Punch* had kindly agreed to pay me a small regular fee, for which I was to do work as opportunity offered. This I did, but it became increasingly difficult; when I was promoted to command the depot, and to D.A.D.R. I drew less, and the result was a debt at the end, which had to come out of the gratuity to which all temporary officers were entitled. However, I am drifting into personal matters of finance, which, though of vital importance to me at the time, have perhaps no place here and are better forgotten.

Uphill Work

I slogged along somehow, and found appearances gradually coming into their own place again, and everyday actualities, barring an unsatisfactory bank account, becoming as vague as before. I have never been introspective, and I find it difficult to explain why I did, or did not do, any particular thing.

I have been asked why I became an artist; I do not know. Did I enjoy it? Yes, qualified by the fact that I never yet did anything that satisfied me; that statement is not conventional modesty, rather the reverse, as it implies that I have conceit enough to believe in my judgment of what is good. I did nothing but paint until I was over thirty, and the one thing I most regret is that I ever did anything else. I suppose I have got more popular credit out of my pen-drawings for *Punch* than anything else, but I have always hated pen-drawing much as I like humorous illustration. I often suspected, however, that the opinion of *Punch* was to the contrary and I remember in this connection a story told me by the late Field-Marshal Lord Methuen, a friend I valued very much. When on a cruise, I think to South Africa, he met one of the proprietors of that august paper, and somehow the conversation turned on my work, which the Field-Marshal liked and for which he sometimes had suggested subjects. His acquaintance said he liked my drawing, but added that it was a pity I had no sense of humour.

This remark, considering that I had at that supplied almost all the sporting subjects for his paper during about 35 years, seemed humorous enough to both of us, however unconsciously so. The Scots are said to be lacking in wit, but few Scots fail to have humour. The Irish, on the contrary, have wit ready to the



Signs of the Times

A suggestion for bringing the starting gate up to date
(Rough sketch for drawing, Sestiniello, but rejected by Punch?)

Sir Owen Seaman

tongue, but very little sense of humour, and none whatever in politics.

It may seem an odd thing to say about one of the best editors of *Punch* during its long life, and it will, I dare say, shock some people, but much letter correspondence with the late Owen Seaman convinced me that, undoubted wit as he was, he had very little sense of humour. A master in the use of words, his blue pencil could improve a clumsy sentence at a touch, but it could at times also inadvertently eliminate a point of humour underlying it. As I think I have said, I seldom saw Seaman in person, but had much epistolary intercourse with him; his letters, very difficult to decipher, were always serious, sometimes cutting, but hardly ever betrayed a sense of humour.

I have heard one in authority say that humour changes and has to march with the times; I wholly disagree with that; the humour of Shakespeare, or Cervantes, or nearer home of James Austin or Dean Ramsey, the collector of the greatest book of Scots humour ever made, is the same humour as to-day's. The fashion of presenting it, as exemplified in the present day Press, may change, that is all.

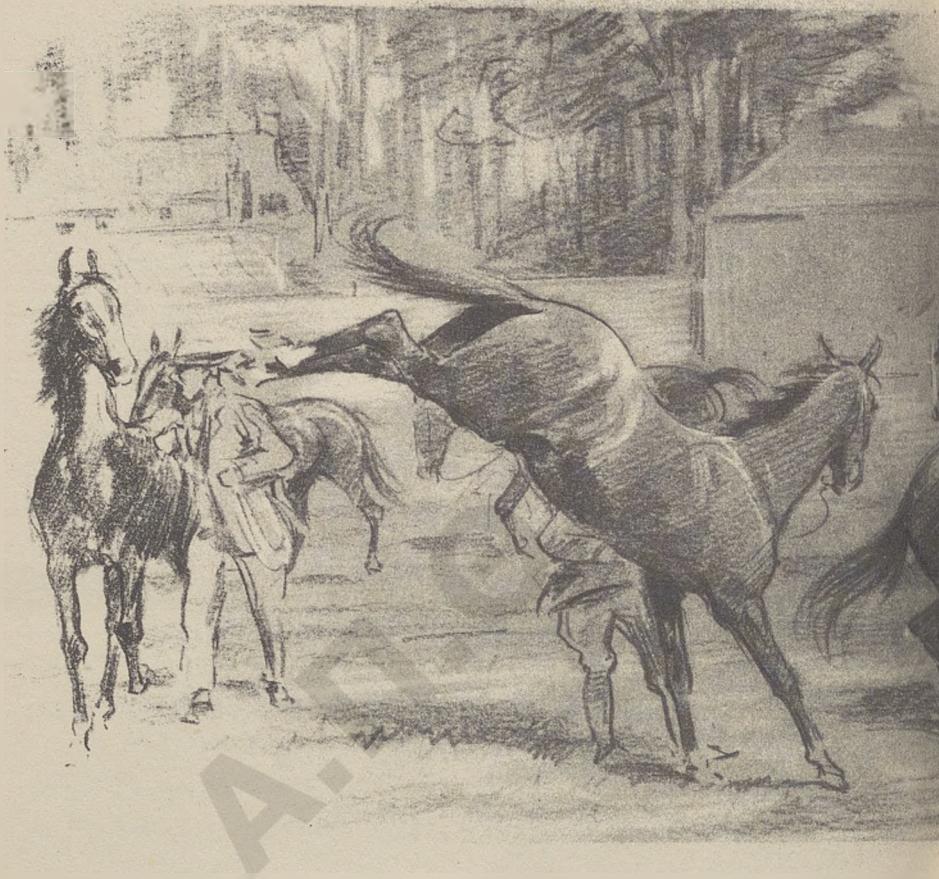
I have mentioned Lord Methuen, of whom I saw much after the War. I have heard criticisms of him as a soldier, but criticism would seem to be the lot of most soldiers who took part in the much greater war since his active time, and I am not qualified to judge any of them. He had misfortunes in the Boer War, including a bad wound, which left him lame to the end of his life, and I have heard it said that among the troops he had then, some were by no means up to our usual standard, though he was too loyal ever to suggest such a thing.

The late Lord Methuen

I believe it is recorded that Queen Victoria said that he was the nicest man in her kingdom, and I can quite believe that record true; the reason, I should surmise, being that he would probably speak to her just as he did to every one else, with a perfectly unconscious courtesy. He was the best of company, and having known almost every one of note during a long life could speak of men or events from a very intimate angle. He was interested in almost everything, from international politics to rearing pigs or bee-keeping, and this led to one peculiarity in his latter life, a habit of changing subjects in conversation so suddenly that it was quite a mental exercise to keep pace with him.

I used often to shoot with him, and remarked one day to another of the party on how punctual the Field-Marshal was. The answer was, "He's worse than that, he's always ten minutes too early." It was a good fault and one could, on experience, provide against it. He loved a hunt, but towards the end of his life kept only a pony to ride about on. One day, when the Duke's hounds were in Corsham Park, cubbing, he and the pony jumped an exceedingly nasty sunk fence with a wet ditch at the bottom of it, over which I had, when shooting, often crossed on a plank. Some one suggested to him that, mounted as he was, it *was* a nasty place. "Well; I saw Worcester jump it," was the reply. Another time he had gone to Yorkshire to stay with his married daughter at Castle Howard, and, hounds meeting there, they provided him with a horse that had run in the Grand National. Telling me about it afterwards, all he said was, "You know these horses jump very big." I should like to have seen the gallant old soldier of eighty then mounted on it, I am sure he did not disgrace the horse.

Discussing one's family or wife in public, even to eulogize it



A.

Doncaster—



the Sale Paddocks

Family Matters

or her, does not seem to be in the best taste, besides being too difficult a task to execute with the delicacy such a subject requires. This, therefore, must be my excuse for leaving her out of my story, but I must record the loss in 1924 of my good companion through twenty-six years good and evil fortune. The War, and my absence on foreign service, as in the case of so many other families, had caused us to break up our home, and my eldest son being with the battle-cruiser fleet at Rosyth, my wife, to be near him, went to live in Edinburgh during that time. With the end of the War, on our reunion, we took a house near Corsham, Wiltshire, and there occurred her fatal illness, and the termination of a happy married life. We had hunted together, and shared our pleasures and cares, during the best years of our lives, and without a serious difference to remember in all the time.

I continued to live at Easton House for some time, as, though the house was larger than I required, I had made a studio there, which rather tied me to it. Some more or less uneventful years succeeded the War, during which nothing worth recording comes to mind. Trying to go back into work does not afford much of interest to a reader, and that was my chief occupation. To a lover of horses like myself, the lack of anything of the kind, immediately after the War when I had thousands at command, was keenly felt. I had not got home in time to see any of the remount sales, or no doubt I should have found something at the price I could afford, so for about two years I did without.

In 1926 I married Miss Violet Burton, daughter of Captain J. P. M. Burton, a cousin to Sir Richard, the well-known traveller of Mecca fame. We continued at Easton House,

Family Matters

Corsham, until, finding it rather too much for us to manage, we bought a small house at Malmesbury which was easier to run and a better place to hunt from.

When I was doing illustrated articles for *Country Life*, I had to go about a good deal for subjects, and I enjoyed the work. Sales of horses, ploughing matches, fishing expeditions and many other things came into it; I learnt quite a lot about many things; and incidentally acquired almost a habit of trying to work my passage when on holiday trips—a “busman’s holiday” in fact. Once my wife and I felt we would like a trip abroad, so I suggested Normandy, and that we should work our passage by doing an article on one of the French breeding studs. The Haras du Pin was fixed upon, and thinking it might help, I wrote to the Embassy at Paris, asking for a letter to the director. Waiting for this at St. Malo caused some delay, but we filled in the time by going to Dinant, the old walled town about twelve miles up the river Rance, where we saw many amusing things, and made many friends, owing to the fact that my wife spoke much better French than the natives did, which caused them to take her to their hearts at once.

There being several places called Le Pin in that part of France, we had difficulty in finding the right one. Luck was with us, however, and a casual question to a man standing in his shop door at St. Malo—perhaps the only man in that town who knew the place—put us on the right road. Nothing could have been kinder than our reception at the Haras, where we saw all the different kinds of horses encouraged by the French Government. The director, M. de Chevigny, lent my wife French books upon horse-breeding, old and new, from which she took many notes, and on which our article was founded.



*The late George and Mrs. Fenwick
(Well-known in the Pytchley Country)*

Fishing in Brittany

I sketched characteristic stallions whilst my wife wrote, and our work was finished. *Country Life* published the article in two consecutive numbers. I do not think the result left any profit to us, but we had a good and interesting holiday trip.

It is often my practice, when going anywhere that might offer opportunity for its use, to put a fishing-rod in with my luggage. While we were in France it seemed almost a duty to try to justify its presence, so we made a small detour and arrived at Guingamp in Brittany. When we got there we found that, since the hay harvest was not yet over, all approach to the river was forbidden, as it lay among the hay-fields. This is worth while remembering by any one intending to fish in unknown parts of Brittany. So, like two children, we began asking any one where fishing was to be got. Luck again held, as, going into the bank to cash a note, we were told that the inn-keeper just opposite was an enthusiastic *pêcheur*. The very thing we wanted—an inn and a fishing landlord. The character given him proved even less than he deserved. He told us that the river was no use at present, but if we did not mind a drive in a taxi he would show us good fishing. This he did, even going out with us to see that all was right. Certainly it was a good place, good fish were rising everywhere when we arrived, but alas, as so often in fishing, that forenoon rise just finished when our rods were put up, and never came on again while we were there. One trout only was our bag. We made the acquaintance of a brother sportsman, who, finding us in possession of the only boat, was trying his luck from the shore until we invited him aboard. A splendid fellow he was; he might have been a near relation of the great Napoleon himself, except that he was big enough to make three of him. Our little

Sport in Brittany

civility, and my wife's French, soon made us great friends, and when we met him next day, he had had a good day with eight fish, and told us about all the places he knew in Brittany where fishing and shooting were obtainable.

While at Guingamp we attended a local race-meeting, also under the chaperonage of our landlord. He even went so far as to mark our cards with what he considered likely winners. Of this latter kindness I can only say that the fact that I do not bet saved me some money, and if he followed his tips himself he must have had a pretty bad afternoon, but it was well meant.

A race-meeting of the kind we saw is a very varied entertainment, including flat and hurdle racing, steeplechasing and trotting.

I did make one small investment, buying a two franc tote ticket (value about one shilling and eight pence) purely on the appearance of one horse in a steeplechase. At the time I did not know but it proved to be an odds-on favourite, and my profit, I think, came to about sixpence, so I can hardly be called a plunger.

I have always chaffed my wife about being able to speak French faster than any one I have ever seen, when excited, and this fluency was to prove of great use on one occasion. This was on our journey to St. Malo to take ship for home. For part of the journey we got an express train, but had to change at a junction. Here my wife alighted, leaving me struggling with our luggage to pass a number of peasant women struggling equally hard to get the other way along a very narrow corridor. My wife was, meanwhile, by sheer weight of words, preventing the guard from blowing his whistle to start the express, and, although the pace was killing, she held on till I came up,



Hunter Turned Out

907.

Malmesbury

just as he went to blow his whistle I fell out on the platform, scattering luggage broadcast. However, we caught our boat at St. Malo.

While living at Malmesbury, most of my hunting days were spent in that part known as the wall country, being the nearest of the Beaufort meets. Walls as obstacles are apt to become rather monotonous, but we sometimes had variety, getting into a bit of vale in the course of a run. I bought a very good horse, Jim Crow, which had done all its schooling in the Pytchley country, but had never even seen a wall. His aversion to that kind of jumping at first supplied some amusement to others, including at least one occasion when I was jumped off—an undignified proceeding for a person of mature years who has commanded a remount depot. The cause arose from the fact that Jim Crow was just coming to a change of mind as to wall jumping. I chanced to be in front and rode at a rather exceptionally high one for that district, the result was a dead stop, head over it; somewhat unseated me, and a most violent buck, clear of the topmost stone, made me what an observer called a “neck-lace” round the horse’s neck, unclasping which landed me on my feet by his head, and when a good lady who followed me asked if I was hurt, I felt inclined to answer with asperity, like Mr. Jorrocks in somewhat similar circumstances, “No, ma’am, rather the reverse!”

I may have been more lucky than most, as I have never had what would rank as a bad accident in many years’ hunting; although I’ve had plenty of falls, sometimes painful, but generally harmless.

Hunting Falls

Some of those who do not participate in the sport imagine that hunting people are jumping gates, high timber and other formidable obstacles all day long. This applies particularly to anxious wives left at home. They may rest assured that the average husband does nothing of the sort, and I am sure the ordinary motorist—which means almost every one to-day—exposes himself to greater danger every time he goes out in a car.

In hunting, the amount of danger is largely in the control of the individual himself. The danger from others, so obvious in motoring, is negligible. There is an occasional person who may jump upon others, but he or she is the rare exception, whereas no one knows when the bad driver may be encountered, and in charge of a terrible engine of destruction, instead of a horse that instinctively, and apart from any volition of his rider, does his best to avoid accident.

Once, on the edge of the Sodbury Vale, in the Beaufort country, a friend and I harmlessly took part in what must have been a very comic fall. We were riding side by side at a growing fence with a ditch in front of it. Captain Roland Corbett, my friend, was well clear on my near side, and just as my horse took off, his swung round to the off into my horse's ribs. Both of us fell on to the fence and the horses into the ditch. Where we joined them; we scrambled about, successfully avoided being trampled upon, and ultimately got out, each with the other's horse. A thorn in the seat of my breeches was the only injury. Another fall with the elements of comedy, was a "voluntary" I took off a mare which went very fast at everything, and never had refused before. A man on my left fell, and that or something took the mare's attention; she stopped



The Pytchley running



In the Crick Vale

Hunting Mishaps

dead and I went on headlong over the fence into a ditch full of water. So sure was I that, at the pace, she must come too, that I ducked my head again into the water and put my arms up to shield it. She did not come, however, and I crawled out like a drowned rat, but quite unhurt. Another water episode was getting a tubed mare into a boggy boundary ditch and having to keep her head above water for about twenty minutes until a farm horse could be got to pull her out. No harm done there either, but cold and unpleasant.

During the War, when at Salonika, I had a novel experience of being removed over the tail of my horse by a sagging field telephone wire. I found him when I arose standing looking at



New Forest Ponies

Hunting Mishaps

me as if inquiring: "what will the man be doing next?" Another time comic relief was supplied by an old horse bucking me off at the beginning of a run with the Beaufort; I was saved by hitting the shoulder of a friend galloping alongside, and thereby replaced in my saddle to proceed with the hunt.

Another accident in which I might be said to have taken part, though only in the role of stage-hand rather than chief actor, was in the New Forest, where one may hunt for a lifetime without ever jumping anything. I had been out with the Buck Hounds, when just getting over an attack of malaria and feeling not too well, so I had left them early and was wending my way along a ride through one of the enclosures, when I saw a man and woman riding through the trees towards me. As I looked, they reached a place where several surface drains converged into the main one, and both horses were picking their way across these, when the lady apparently got frightened, started to cry out and then, without any more warning, threw the reins from her with, I suppose, the purpose of getting off. The man made a hurried grab at her bridle, causing the horse to rear and fall over backwards into a ditch on the top of both of them. I jumped off, throwing my reins over a bush, and ran to help. The woman was pinned against the bank just in the horse's flank and was quite easy to pull out. The man was full length in the ditch with the fore-end of the horse on top of him, holding it round the neck. Nothing I could do could move him; no doubt his spurs and feet were entangled in the thorns and undergrowth. I had several pulls, and a rest or two, but it was no good. Fortunately, a second horseman turned up, and between us, one holding the other round the waist, we at last pulled him out, none the worse. I think it



Blown!

Hunting Mishaps

must be about a record in the way of accidents, and, as such, I will conclude this catalogue of harmless catastrophes. I hope it concluded that lady's hunting, as no one who could do as she did should get on to a horse. I do not understand the psychology of such actions, but it was the second time I had seen a frightened lady discard the reins. The other was in the Row when a lady whose horse had given several plunges did this unaccountable thing, preparatory to pitching on to her head to the off-side of the animal. It may be true that in certain circumstances the horse is a vain hope for safety, but if his rider will only trust to his strong sense of self-preservation, and stay with him as long as he is right side up, little harm will come to either of them.

I was not that enviable thing, a born horseman, as, unlike the lucky children nowadays who have their pony clubs and children's meets, I had no opportunity for regular riding in my childhood, and, barring occasional rides, I really can only claim to have ridden seriously since my early twenties; and I had to make the money to buy the first horse I ever owned. Notwithstanding these handicaps I have had many good horses, often picked up in rather unconventional places and conditions. Tattersalls was, for long, my chief source of supply, and though the ordinary kind of gambling has never interested me in the least, the gamble of buying a cheap horse, and backing my luck by taking him straight into the hunting field, for long held a fascination for me. I did like, if possible, just to jump a sheep hurdle or something of the kind first, and though it may seem like bragging, I will say now that I rarely misjudged the result of that. For years I never knew anything about my purchases previous to acquiring them, and it became a kind of game

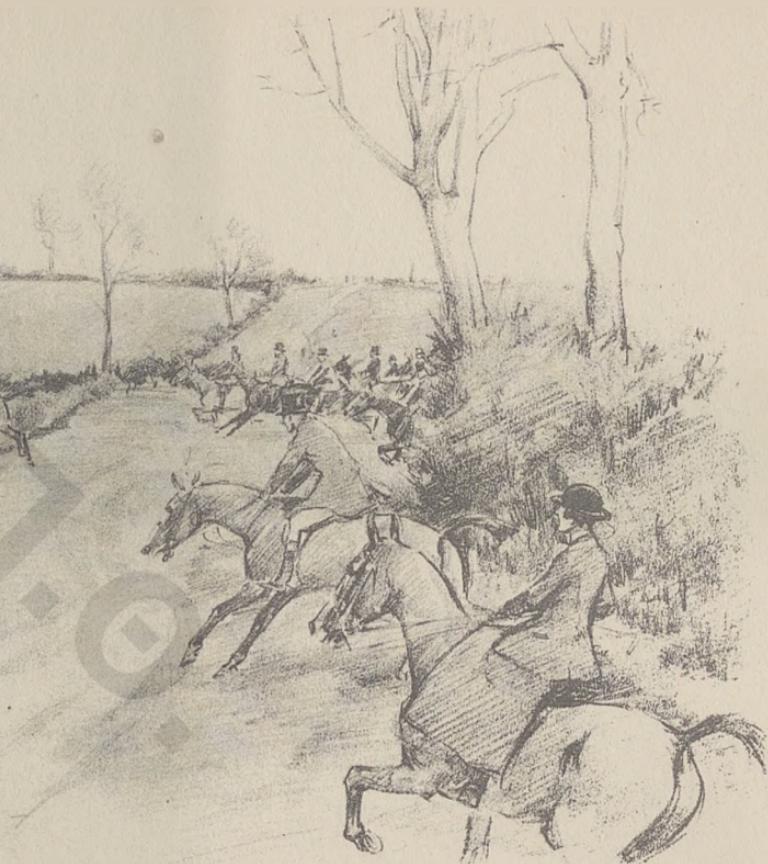
"Chancing it" at Tattersalls

played with myself, which previous information would have entirely spoiled, or even seemed not quite honest.

I knew of an incident in which two friends of mine, now dead, played this game in an even more exciting form. They were Herbert Mulliner and Jasper Selwyn. They had, for a season, run a coach between Rugby and Leamington, and meeting in Town about the beginning of the second season, the matter of the coach came up, and it was decided to get it out again. They had no horses, but the next day, being Monday, it was decided that they should go to Albert Gate and buy four. I think it was Selwyn who formulated a set of rules under which the horses had to be purchased. Both made solemn promises to observe these rules, the chief of which was that neither of them should look at the catalogue, or try to get any information regarding the animals. This was observed to the letter; four good-looking horses were bought, and arrangements made for their being sent that afternoon to the hotel at Rugby where the coach was kept. There was just time to catch a train there and thence the sportsmen went. After having warned the stable staff that the coach would be required, they were finishing a late lunch when the arrival of the team was announced and instructions requested as to the order in which the animals were to be put. This was rather a poser since it had not been considered, but they hurriedly decided by the outward appearance of the animals. To make a long story short, a considerable amount of skill, and even more of luck, got them to Leamington, though, during a part of the journey, one drove the wheelers and the other the leaders as the only way of holding them. Tea was taken there, and an attempt made to start homewards. The team was again put to;



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The Pytchley at Crick

Auction Purchases

things had not improved, however. Something had delayed Selwyn, the prospective homeward driver; the horses had got cold and shoulders were probably tender, one threw himself down on the street and the others kicked and jibbed, and the result, though I hate to tell it, was that the trip was finished by the two quietest pulling the coach back to Rugby. All things considered, it was, I think, a sporting effort, worthy of record in the annals of coaching.

Jasper Selwyn was once the victim of a funny mistake made by the police, all the more curious since his father had been a Lord Justice of Appeal, and he himself was at the time well known as what used to be called "a man about town." When he was coming out of a theatre one night he was arrested in mistake for a wanted criminal, and conveyed to Bow Street. Owing to the time of night he had some difficulty in getting evidence sufficient to justify his release. From what I knew of him, I think no one would enjoy the joke better, save, perhaps, the real criminal.

I used one of Selwyn's best remarks in *Punch* years ago; he and Mulliner had again bought a horse at Tattersalls, and Selwyn took him out, an experimental hunt, with the North Warwickshire. On his return, Mulliner asked how he had gone. "Well enough, but this is not the country for him, it's too far from the sea." Mulliner: "What do you mean—the sea?" Selwyn: "Well, it's the only thing that will stop him." That horse, it turned out, had run third in the National, but he finished his days in Mulliner's brougham in which I have often driven behind him. A queer end for a National horse.

Of course, there were misfits among my auction purchases. I have always liked horses of character, even ugly ones, if they

Auction Purchases

had what I considered the necessary points of construction; and generally speaking they will go, sometimes in the direction desired, occasionally not. I had many pullers, which I did not object to in reason, as it often went with courage, and is the

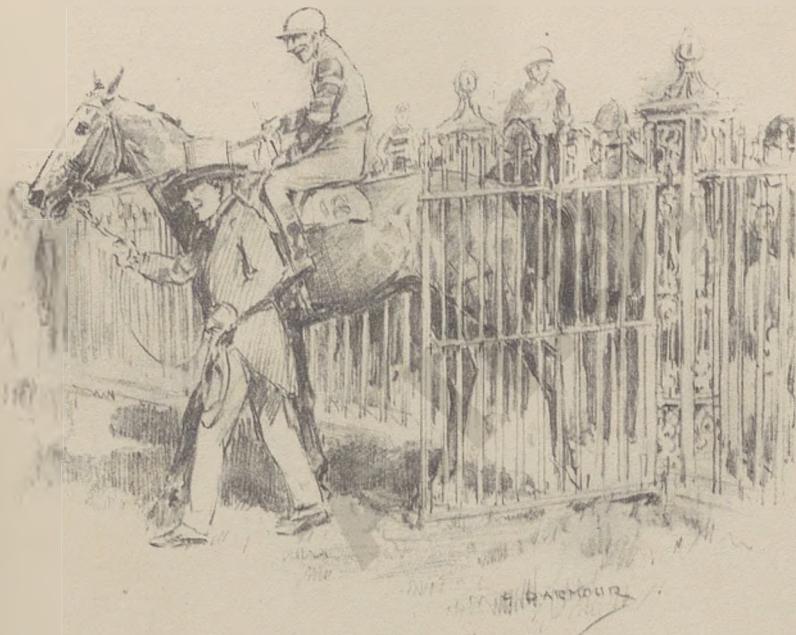


Under the Hammer

first thing to make a good horse cheap. I have always believed that I could do the funkings, but hate a cowardly hunter; nothing is so infectious between horse and man, taking it either way.

I always think that a horse I bought at auction for twenty-three guineas was the best I ever rode to hounds, better than some very expensive animals that have been lent to me. He never refused and only twice fell in six seasons in the Badminton country. Oliver, then first whip to the Beaufort, and afterwards huntsman in Hertfordshire, used always to ask for the old cocktail, if I met him, even long after the horse was dead.

Another great horse I bought from the late Seaton de Winton,



Leading in the Winner

My Last Point-to-Point

who dealt in a small way in Essex before the War, and afterwards trained his brother-in-law's, Sir Ernest Wills', race-horses. "Top o' the Morning" we called the horse, and, but for a defect of temper, which sometimes prompted him to have his own way instead of his rider's, he was, without doubt, the highest class horse I have ever had. A really beautiful blood horse, well up to sixteen stone, he just could not pass the vet on account of the slightest whistle at his slow paces, but this, as the advertisements say, but with more truth, did not stop him. I mention this horse as, in 1914, I rode my last point-to-point on him, a fourteen-stone race, now practically a thing of the past. The course was near Swindon over a natural country of stake and bound fences with two brooks. I was fifty years old then, so, as James Pigg said to the immortal Jorrocks, had "nae caal to ride for raputation"; but such a good horse was a temptation. I had ridden "Top o' the Morning" only half fit, as a five-year-old, in the same race, the year before, and got fourth, and I knew he was stones better than he had been then, but I also knew that, as a jockey, I was many stones worse than Aubrey Hastings on the favourite. I had an adventure during the race when my horse's temperament nearly ended the whole thing for me. I was lying behind, but well up to the field, when we had to jump into a grass road. All did this and turned right, to a better place to jump out, as we landed. I saw him have just a look, right and left, and realized that if I let him turn he would almost certainly bolt right down the lane for home, so drove him straight across at the big fence opposite; it was just a question of who thought faster; I won and we sailed away safely. I let them catch me up and kept a good place behind the two leaders. At the second and last brook the

Keeping Horses in the Open

horse lying second ran out and we were left with only Hastings to beat. But I made the common mistake of the amateur rider—left it too long, and I could not catch him. How good my horse was I never knew, but I am pretty sure that, if the jockeys had been changed, he would have won by the length of a field. It is easy to be wise after the event but it does not win races. Hastings trained, rode and won the Grand National on “Ascetic’s Silver” in 1906, so I was in rather too good company.

War and the remount service brought horses of all kinds into my experience, and the work was of enormous interest. Dealing with the animals in bulk, so to speak, afforded opportunity to observe things that would have taken years to study on the usual small scale. I had, for a number of years, ceased to close my stable door at any time, winter or summer, with the result that coughs and colds never troubled any horses I had, but the chance to prove the theory on a large scale came with the War in a way I had never anticipated.

I have always believed in open air for horses, and experience of the winter blizzards of Salonika, the like of which no one has ever seen in this country, bore that out. Horses on lines suffered most, being denied any chance there was of finding shelter. In that weather, they looked the picture of misery; heads down, backs up and tails turned as far as possible to windward. But I never saw a single one the worse of it; no colds, coughs, or any evidence of illness, and when the weather improved they cheered up and took the usual interest in life again. Earlier, at Swaythling Depot, we had had just a taste of the misunderstanding which can arise from ignorant observation of horses living like this in the open. Word came that questions had been asked in Parliament about the hardships

Keeping Horses in the Open

inflicted on horses at the Remount Depots; no doubt some well-meaning but uninformed politician had seen some on lines during bad weather. It was announced that a Labour Member



Horses in Snow

would come down to inspect things, and that we were to give him every facility. The first, I remember, was a good lunch, fortified by which he was shown the whole depot, out and in. The weather was beautiful, and without any extra spit and polish he was perfectly satisfied with the system, and went

Stalking at Ben Armine

back to Westminster to rend the critics who had started the canard. A cold, wet day, however, might have led to a completely different conclusion.

I have already mentioned the old and dear friend to whom I was, for over twenty years, indebted to for deer-stalking and other highland sports. He died in 1927, and, if all get their deserts, went to the happy hunting grounds.

Since then another good sportsman, several years in succession, invited us to Sutherland where he had taken Ben Armine, a forest belonging to the Duke of Sutherland. This enabled me to renew my acquaintance with a sport that has many attractions. Not as wild a country as some I have stalked in, it offered many of the difficulties, and some new ones, that go to make the fascination of the sport. As a general rule, I think, the more uneven and steeper the ground the easier the stalking. Steep hills allow of getting above the deer, which, for some reason, always expect danger from below, and therefore watch the ground there. Also flat or even waving ground generally affords only a few inches of cover, under which one has to crawl in to shooting distance, often also over quite open parts, in full sight, where *ventre à terre* is the only means of progression.

At Ben Armine the chief difficulty was mainly that much of it was almost flat, that is in regard to general conformation only, for, in detail, these flats were, I think, the most tiring ground I have ever had to traverse. It was poor, sour land covered with tussocks of scrubby grass and heather. One foot was never on a level with the other, and any stalk entailed some very long crawls on hands and knees, varied by equally long wriggles, as the serpent goes, unassisted by his suppleness, in the case of one of my mature years. I shall always remember

Stalking at Ben Armine

the first of these stalks on the "flats," and the look the stalker—then a stranger to me—gave me when I put up my rifle only to find I had forgotten to adjust a pair of glasses I used for shooting, and could not do so until the deer had gone. That look conveyed a mixture of reproach and disgust long to be remembered.

From the same stalker I got a story that I used in *Punch*, which nearly fitted my sad case. In this, after a long crawl, the stag went away without giving a shot, and the stalker, turning on the stout party following, said, "What's the use o' me cra-a-lin' on ma belly when you come along like a bluidy great lighthoose?"

One day there, on the highest part of the hills, when my wife, a ghillie and I were walking between two lochs where we fished, we had an uncommon experience. About a hundred and fifty yards away we saw a stag lying on a small ridge, his head stretched out before him. Both the ghillie and I thought he must be a wounded beast, and we decided to go and see. Without any attempt to hide, we three walked over towards him, quite in the open, and got to within forty yards before he took any notice. Only then he sprang up and galloped away quite sound. Both the ghillie and his brother the stalker, when told, said they had never had such an experience, and we concluded that, as stags do, he must have come in a long way during the night and been very tired.



Salmon Fishing

Most of my salmon fishing has been done in the shooting or stalking season, therefore I cannot tell of the thrills of the fresh run spring fish, but the little river at Ben Armine supplied my wife with the chance to catch her first salmon, a thing thrilling enough to both fisher and onlookers. It was one of the lucky times when the river did as a river should and seldom does, came to fishable height when wanted, and the fish seemed to be in the same accommodating frame of mind; that is with the exception of one, and he, after all, gave me an experience which I have never had before, of two hours' play, ending in a rush out of the pool and escape into impossible water. Like the good fox who saves his brush at the end of a hunt, may he live long and flourish! I forgive him. It may help belief in this tale, though a fishing one, if I state that he was *not* the biggest fish I have ever seen, and was probably foul-hooked, by the tail I should surmise.

We had at that time two days' fishing, each losing several fish, and catching four in all. Another incident of those two days was new to me. I have had much experience of the highland gnat or midge—painful recollections—but never as bad as then. At one time, when playing a fish, I was so bitten that I turned giddy and had to stop and go up on a hill above the pool and into the wind to recover; I really felt like fainting.

I have known the Highlands in many different seasons, but never, until a few years ago, in the middle of winter. The chance came from a friend who used to spend a part of most winters on the Isle of Harris, and invited me to go with him about Christmas time to get woodcock. We got a certain number, but fewer than we hoped for, as the mild weather allowed them to settle all over the island instead of in certain sheltered places.

The Drag Down



The Island of Harris

This gave us choice of about 40,000 acres, with a proportionately thin cock population. I must admit that the Harris woodcock defeated me; I had the greatest difficulty in seeing them. Though rising at one's feet, at shooting distance, they became invisible to me in the winter light.

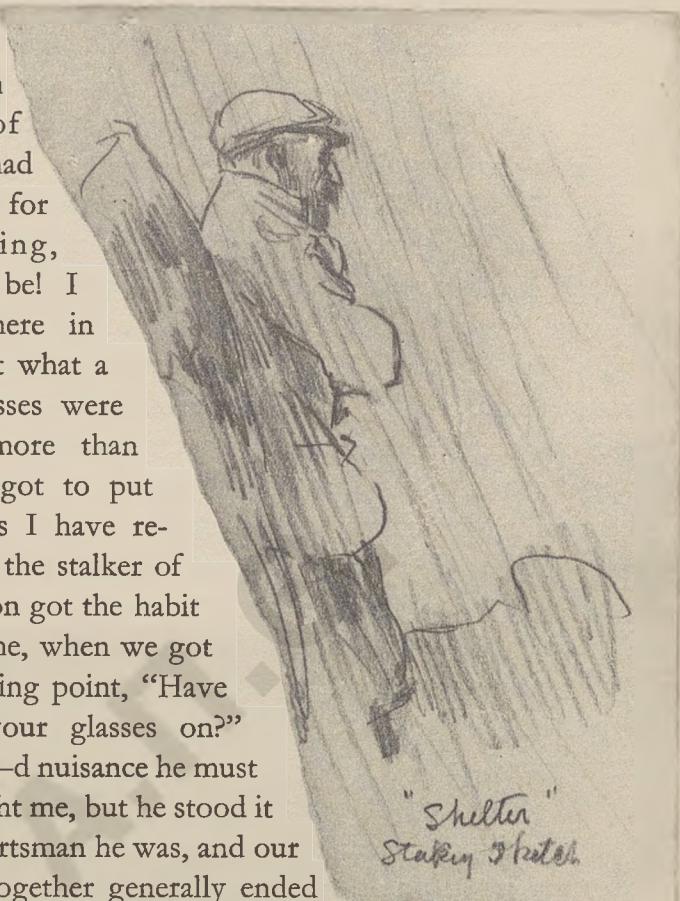
Harris in itself was well worth seeing, particularly the wonderful seas. Though it was fine weather, I was never so impressed by the feeling of that irresistible power. To see wave after wave crash into the inlets of the rocky coast, and the spray fly like almost solid soap-suds over one's head, was an impressive sight. What a storm must be like, breaking on these rocks, may be imagined; no boat, swimmer, nothing alive nor yet the inanimate work of man's hands, could escape being broken into fragments on these rocks.

There are red deer on Harris, and though small compared with those of the mainland, the venison there was, I think, the best I have ever eaten. I shot two hinds but did it badly, owing, as I afterwards discovered, to faulty ammunition; it sounds a poor excuse, but it was comforting as my bad shooting had rather haunted me.

Lack of toleration between young and old is an ever-recurring subject, the charge generally coming from the old against the young; but, when one begins to get into the sere and yellow stage, one has to tolerate one's own deficiencies. I once could use a sporting rifle pretty well, but a time came when, with naked eye, the back or the fore sight had a hairy edge. Some days it would be clear, depending on the light, I suppose, but more often not. Troubles began in trying to get glasses which would clear all that up. As often as not, if the sights were clear, the object became obscure. I had a bad time with all

"Growing Old is no Joke"

this until,
one day
I tried on
a pair of
glasses I had
had made for
my painting,
and glory be! I
saw all there in
focus. But what a
bother glasses were
stalking; more than
once I forgot to put
them on as I have re-
lated, until the stalker of
that occasion got the habit
of asking me, when we got
near the firing point, "Have
you got your glasses on?"
What a d---d nuisance he must
have thought me, but he stood it
like the sportsman he was, and our
last stalk together generally ended
with a stag. Still, getting old is no joke; at the back of one's
mind there is always the thought: I wonder how long this will
last. Time was when I never had experienced being beat; lazy,
wanting a rest, yes, often; but never all in, until, one evening, after
a long stalk and crawl on these confounded "flats," I had got
my stag, but he had to be dragged by the ghillie and stalker
over a mile to the pony path. There was a short cut home,





A leaf from the Author's Stalking Sketch-book

Sketching on Stalks

right over the ridge of hills bounding the said flats. I volunteered to carry the rifle, and go that way. A Mauser is not very heavy; mine was not at starting, but it increased in a kind of compound interest way, every quarter mile up hill, until something more than gravitation seemed to be pulling it into my shoulder muscles. A rest on the broad of my back, now and then, did good, but the confounded thing seemed to have been gathering weight all the time. I used to be fond of that rifle, but I hated it like sin afterwards and felt like leaving it behind only I would have been ashamed to explain why. Pride only remained, and the question was would that last out till I got home. It did till we reached the top of the ridge, and after another rest, gravitation took a hand, and helped by expectation of that glass of something awaiting me, I staggered down the hill.

For many years it has been my constant practice to carry a sketch-book somewhere about my person and this, when stalking, sometimes earned me a reputation for eccentricity. Once, I remember, we had just spied the ground and found deer, shootable stags, far below where we were. This entailed a long and exceedingly rough journey along the top of a ridge of hills forming a part of Ben More, a mountain on the borders of Ross and Sutherland. This walk, like many others, took us into wonderful country and places which only the exigencies of stalking would have revealed. Parts of Ben More are composed of very curious rock formation, some of it rectangular as if built by man, other parts looking as if some prehistoric earthquake had taken the country and squeezed it up into every conceivable and inconceivable shape. We came to a place where a round hill was joined to the rest of the ridge by great loose

Among the Big Stones



A Pass in the Highlands

366

stones, varying from the size of a cottage to that of a chair, suggesting how a heap of broken road metal might look to a spider crawling over it. I simply had to make a sketch, even if it cost us the stalk in progress. A quarter of an hour spent on that, much to the distaste of the stalker, provided me with the note of a scene I shall always remember, but the wind changed in that time, and in spite of a careful and

Sketching on Stalks

very uncomfortable slither down the bed of a torrent, which sometimes ran into the back of my neck and out at the seat of my breeches, the deer got our wind before we were within half a mile of them, and moved in long line away into the distance. I have no doubt the stalker inwardly damned art and artists, though Highland politeness prevented the thought finding expression.

Lunch was generally a solitary meal, in which I ate my bit of grouse and oat-cake alone, the men usually, I thought, preferring to sit some way off with theirs; perhaps they required opportunity to give expression to what they thought of the "rifle." For these lunches I generally tried to get near water, it might be only a hillside spring, or a mountain torrent, but it served to dilute the dram that was generally their accompaniment. When the tobacco stage was arrived at I often made a sketch, and many of these serve as a kind of diary, which recalls much more than was represented in the actual picture itself. A sketch-book is a good companion which never speaks out of turn and patiently waits the time when it can be of use. What more can one desire of a friend?

Time may come when, however keen one is, the physical requirements of some sports become too exacting, and the sportsman is lucky who can fall back on the horse as an auxiliary. With some men there seems to be almost no limit to the time of that, except death itself.

CHAPTER XV

Concluding

HERE is an old tradition that ladies reserve to the postscript the matter of real importance in a letter. Perhaps I am copying them in leaving to this chapter a few things to which I attach great importance as being connected with such art as has filled most of my life. In doing so it may have added, I dare say, more grey hairs than might otherwise have adorned my cranium, but it was great fun and well worth it.

Nothing is less edifying than to hear a man holding forth about his work; it is for the critic to write about pictures, for the artist only to paint them, but as no singer sings only for himself, so no painter paints without wanting some one to see what he has done. This being so accounts for the illustrations to such a book as I am trying to compile.

A good friend, lately speaking of an exhibition of equestrian portraits I was holding, said, "I didn't know you painted!" and this suggested to me using some of the pictures as illustrations here. By way of demonstration, I am not sure that painting, and, say, penwork, by any means help each other, sometimes the reverse. There are conventions in both, but these differ greatly. The pen, for instance, for necessity ignores what is a basic necessity in painting, a full range of tones; you can only, as in etching, rely on a stronger line to bring objects in the foreground into their necessary prominence. This, at

The Equestrian Portrait

least, is my experience after a good many years of both brush and pen, as well as observation of others' work. I think I shall not be contradicted if I say that a large proportion of the finest pictures in the world are portraits; also many of the worst. If the latter statement were not true, one might be discouraged by the very goodness of the best, and feel that what had been done so magnificently by the masters was impossible to follow oneself. But the sight of the picture of the Mayor of Puddletown-on-Sea, presented to the Corporation, and hung in the Town Hall, makes one say, "D—— it all, I can do something better than that, anyway!" Comforted by this, I have found it possible to get great enjoyment out of portrait-painting combining it with my leaning towards the horse to the extent of making my pictures generally equestrian portraits.

In the days of Stubbs and Ben Marshall there was a substrata of painters who practised this branch and often produced results even worse than that of his Worship the Mayor. But Stubbs and Marshall themselves were something very nearly, if not quite, great artists, and most of the others are forgotten except when it suits the dealers to revive them for a time. Of the undoubtedly great masters, Velazquez, to my mind the greatest painter of all time, has, in the Prado at Madrid, some of the most splendid equestrian portraits in the world, and Van Dyck also made use of its possibilities. In these masters we have the best possible precedent for combining horse and man pictorially.

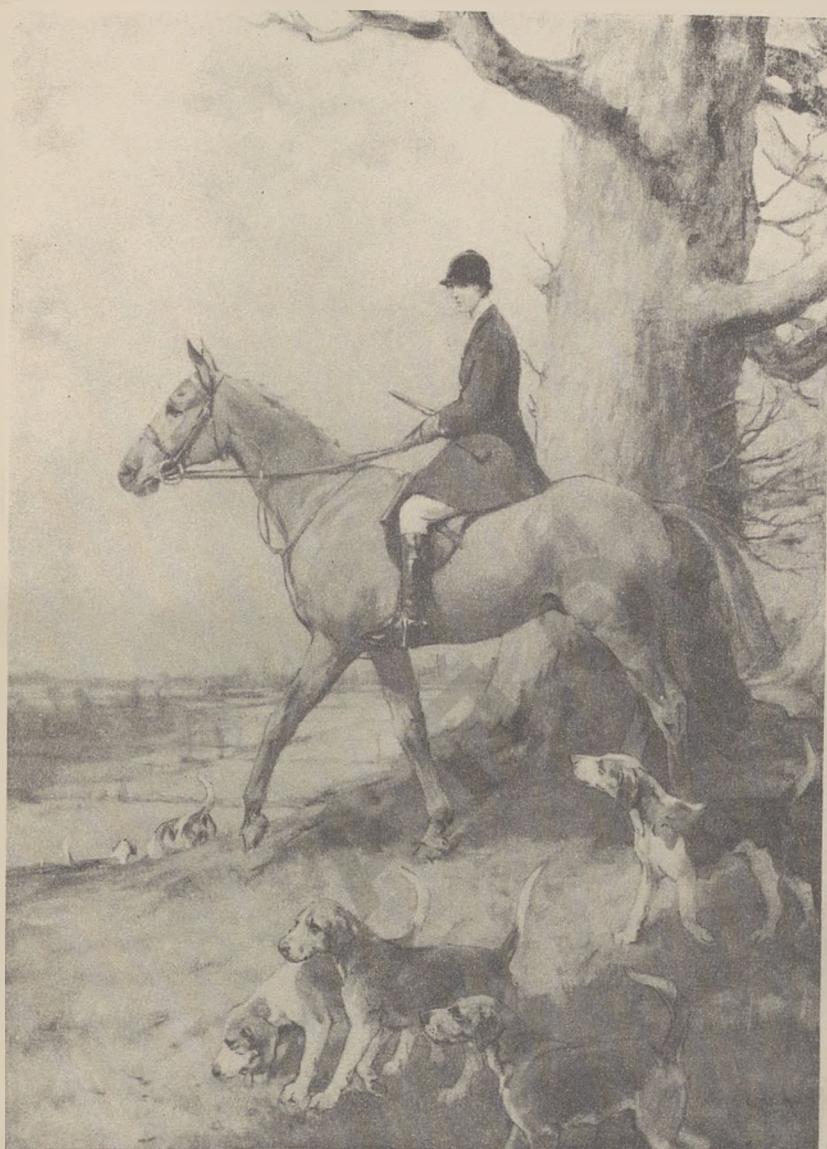
I think the most interesting portraits, to myself at least, that I have painted, have had hounds in the picture somewhere. They help to avoid the appearance of being posed for the purpose. It seems to me that the posed portrait suited a time when costume and manners lent themselves to formal treatment, but in



Col. The Hon. Keith and Mrs. Mason



Major C. Ward Jackson, late Master of the Bexhill Harriers



The late Miss Esmé Jenner when Master of Sparkford Vale Harriers, 1932

Equestrian Portraits

these more casual days the spontaneous is more in keeping with the times, and nothing affords action and gaiety more readily and unexpectedly than the hunting-field. John Masefield told me that his interest in hunting was largely derived from that, and I think it is also of many people.

One of the portraits I have used to illustrate this book, of Major Ward Jackson, at one time Master of the Bexhill Harriers, includes some hounds, unusual on account of their being whole-coloured tan. Though interesting, I think they were not so picturesque as the tri-coloured breeds. I had rather a shock from an unusual cause during Major Jackson's sittings. He was an enthusiast about boxing, and having discovered a village lad that he thought showed promise, was watching him exercising with a boxing partner he had procured for him, with an old boxer as instructor. The latter came into the house, where I was, chuckling and muttering: "Oh, my, didn't the boss get a black eye, a real beauty!" I guessed that he referred to my model and was thinking of the long delay of sittings pending his recovery. When he appeared, I was relieved to find it was the left side optic which was black and not the right. Enthusiasm had prompted his putting on the gloves himself with this result, so prevent your sitters boxing during sittings if possible.

Another sitter of mine incurred a danger one would think quite foreign to such things—the suspicion of being considered insane. It was to be a slight, one-sitting sketch, so far as I remember, and a Sunday was the only available day. There was a frost with snow on the ground. My victim sat on his horse outside until they both got cold, then he was to be seen galloping up and down his own avenue in full hunting-kit. If

Painting Horses

any one had been interested in having him confined as a lunatic, I think such evidence would have been considered conclusive. I have on occasion, out of consideration to the sitter, dispensed with their changing into the complete hunting kit, but if they could have seen themselves as others saw them, I think no trouble would have been spared. I have always made a point of getting at least some kind of sitting outside in the natural lighting, as I think the "atmosphere" is of great importance, and if it gives some trouble to the sitter, in winter especially, it gives a good deal more to me, so honours are easy.

Painting portraits of horses is also very interesting to any one with a love of the animal. But it has disadvantages peculiar to itself, the worst being that only a limited number of people realize that such things should be pictures in the best sense of the word, as much as any other subject. I do not think, on the average, that those who hunt or ride are any less intelligent or cultivated than other people, but many have been reared from earliest days on the sort of horse-portrait, to be found in many country houses, which has no relation whatever to art, and whose producers are as plentiful as fleas on a dog. Any one who has an eye for a horse, and a little facility with paint, can produce a recognizable representation of a particular animal, even exaggerating good points and minimizing faults, and thus comes to be ranked as a "horse-painter." But men like those I have mentioned—Robert Alexander, R.S.A., and, farther back, Ben Marshall and Stubbs—show what can be done with that great animal. Morland too, perhaps the best of all, made pictures of the types that interested him; the work-a-day horse he saw around him, and made beautiful pictures of what would have passed unnoticed if by a lesser artist. Stable surroundings are



Remus, 1933



Mrs. George Salt

The Blackmore Vale

often exceedingly unpromising material, but I have often found that even then some effect of light may be observed, perhaps only during a short period, which can be made use of to counteract the prosaic commonplace which at first seemed inevitable. I have found a sky supply this need; Ben Marshall often did. Stubbs, in some cases, gave distinction to a quite commonplace house and trees as a background to some horses, thereby making a picture and at the same time, I dare say, gratifying the owner of both. The pictorial possibilities of the horse-picture are by no means exhausted if tackled in the right way.

The portrait of Mrs. George Salt in this book, which I painted just lately, shows one way of solving a problem often full of difficulty. The credit for the idea, which is almost good enough to found a fashion, is due to the subject's brother, who commissioned me to paint it as a present to her on her wedding. I, of course, entered into the scheme with enthusiasm, as also did the lady, a happy condition of things not always to be counted upon with sitters, so any credit the picture might be worthy of should be shared among the three of us.

My last change of residence was to the Blackmore Vale Hunt in Somerset, where I now live. This part of England, though not rated among the first-class countries for hunting, like the Midlands, was once favourably compared to them by no less a person than Whyte Melville. He was probably describing the Sparkford Vale, near which I am at present writing. I think he must have seen it in a dry season, or he would have mentioned one very palpable difference, that one is seldom what they call on the top of the ground, but galloping through pretty deep going. Fortunately, most of the fences are not so

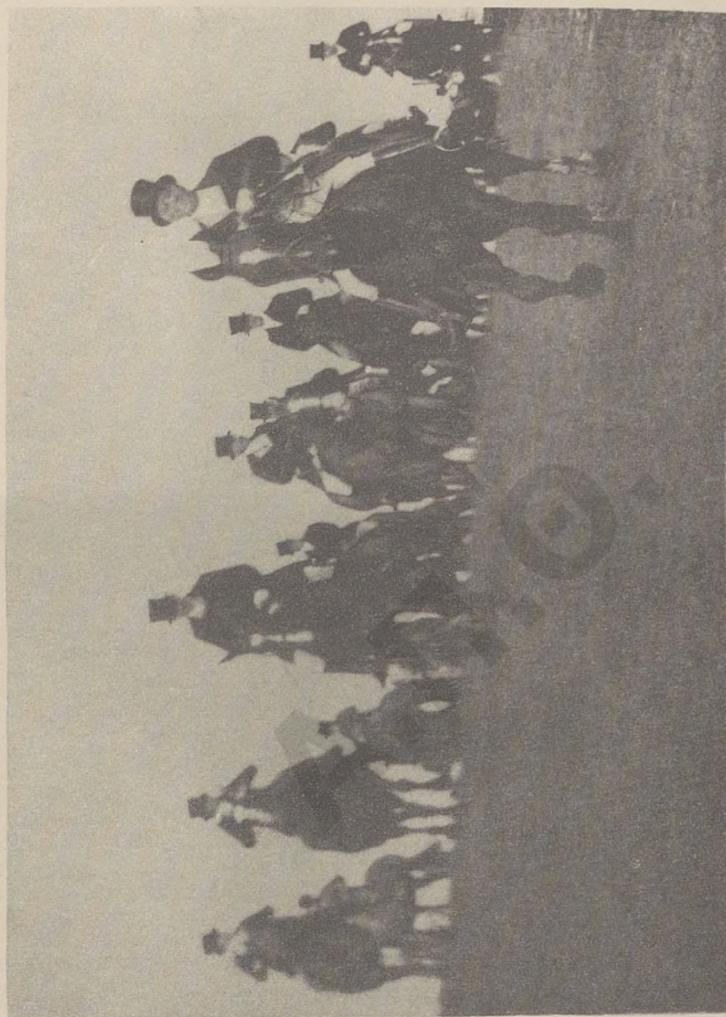
The Blackmore Vale

strong and big as those encountered farther north, but the going and the number of brooks make up for that. Notwithstanding these differences, I like the Blackmore Vale. It is a friendly country, where there is an endeavour to make hunting possible for the poor as well as the rich, and where every one can hunt as it pleases them without being criticized as a "funk-stick" or "duffer." Every one cannot be in front, or afford such horses as can take them there, nor, if they could, does age or other infirmities always allow of their doing it.

Dorset and Somerset have, since very old times, been a home of the Sport of Kings. Within a mile of where I am there are still traces of what is called King Arthur's Hunting Causeway, and further south, in Dorset, is Cranbourne Chase, a hunting preserve of King John in the twelfth century, and still containing foxes and roe deer in the big woods that constitute it. There are "acres of woodland and oceans of grass" where the fortunate owner of a strong horse or two, well-bred enough to stay through the mud, can have plenty of fun among pleasant and real country people, who will take him for what he is, not what he has. The "Zummerset" farmer and his labourer are good fellows, who take an interest in sport, whether they can take part in it or not, and enjoy nothing better than seeing three or four sportsmen in one of their many brooks. One day last season there were, simultaneously, three so situated, and when the last one in made something like swimming motions on coming to the surface, a lad on the bank shouted, "'E don't 'ave to swim, 'e can walk, zur.'" This applies, I think, to most of them, though, thanks to a good horse, I have never had to try. There are, within four miles of here, a choice of two packs of foxhounds, and a pack of harriers which that lying jade



*Portrait of Major G. C. S. Hodgson, M.C., Master of the Sparkford Vale Harriers
(Painted this Year (1936)—A Presentation)*



The Author with the Duke of Beaufort's



The Author
(An impression by Major C. A. Rickards)

Vale!

rumour says sometimes by accident may hunt an outlying fox
and give him the fright of his life, too.

Otter hounds visit us in summer, while foxes and pheasants
seem to manage to live in sufficient harmony to fulfil their
respective destinies.

A sporting country. More power to it!

A.P.O.



